

HERGÉ

THE ADVENTURES OF

TINTIN

\*

# KING OTTOKAR'S SCEPTRE

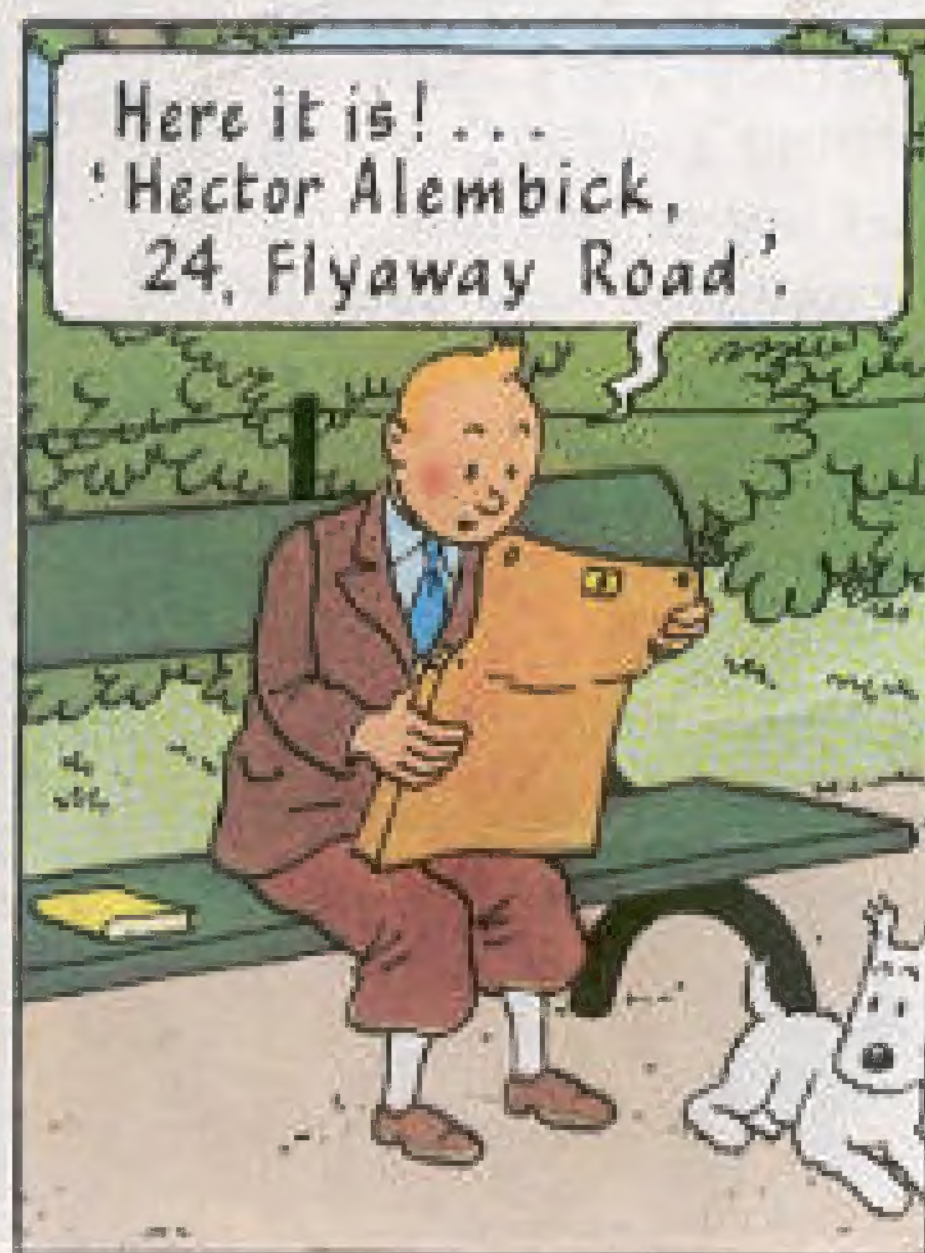
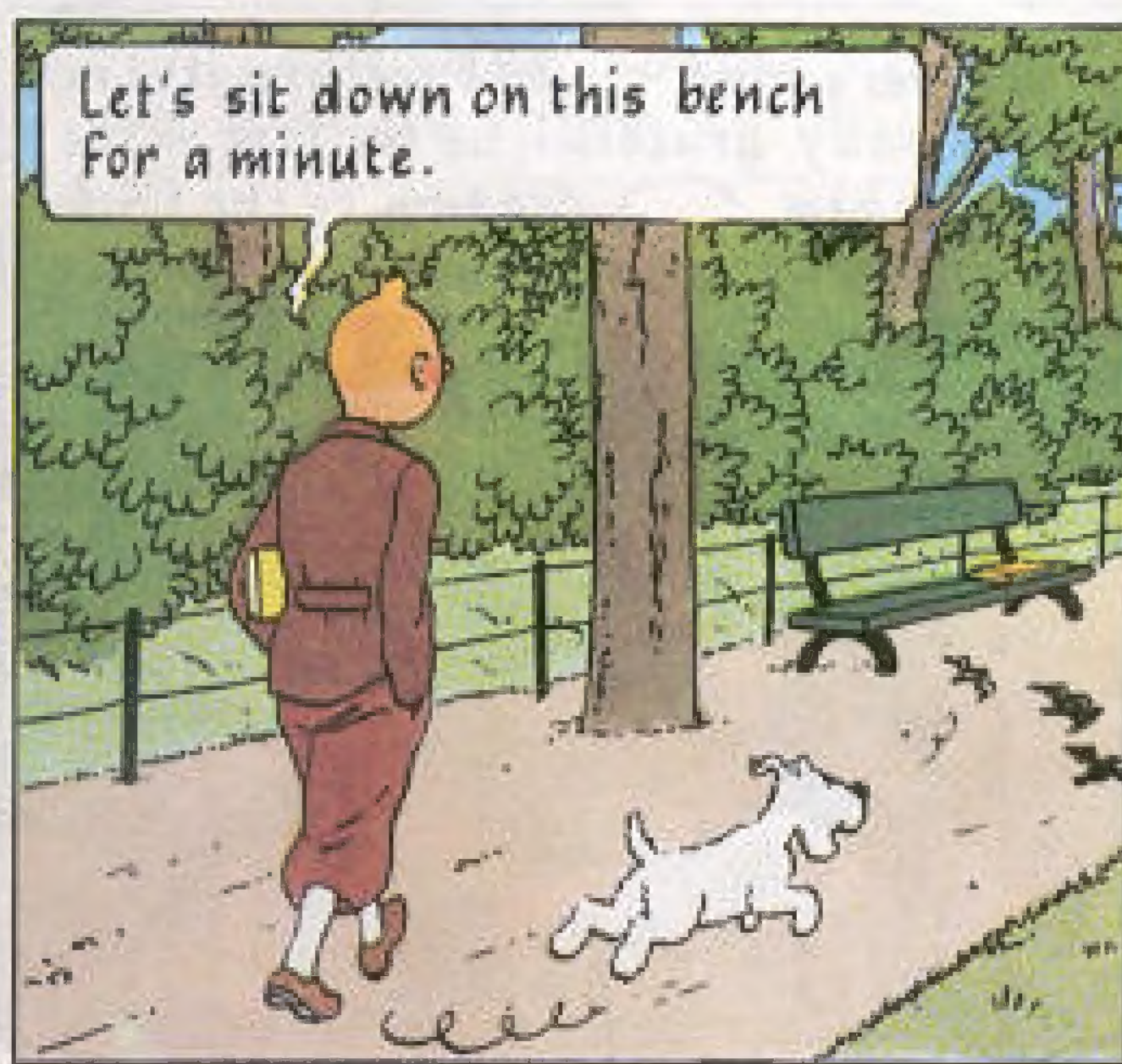


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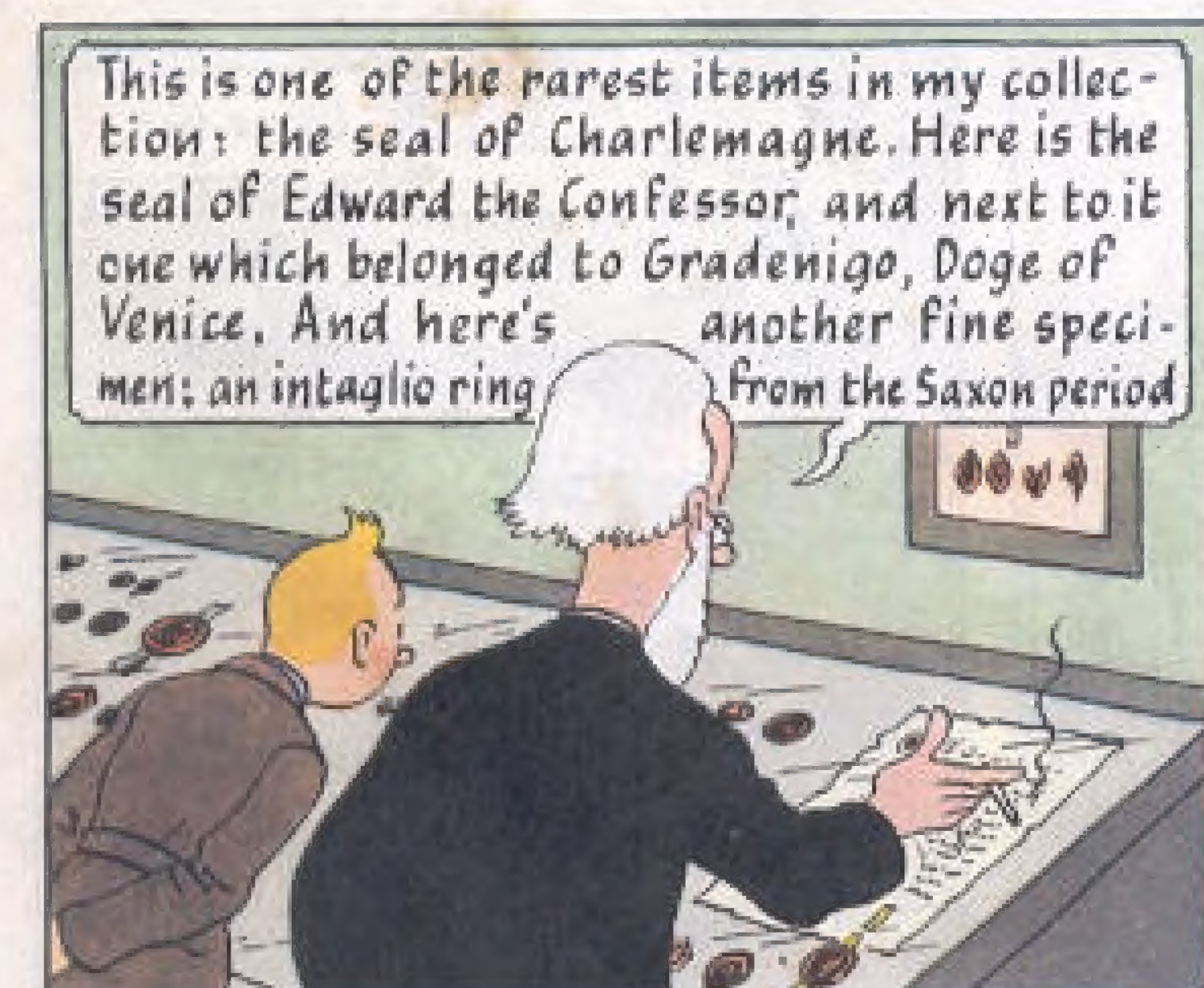
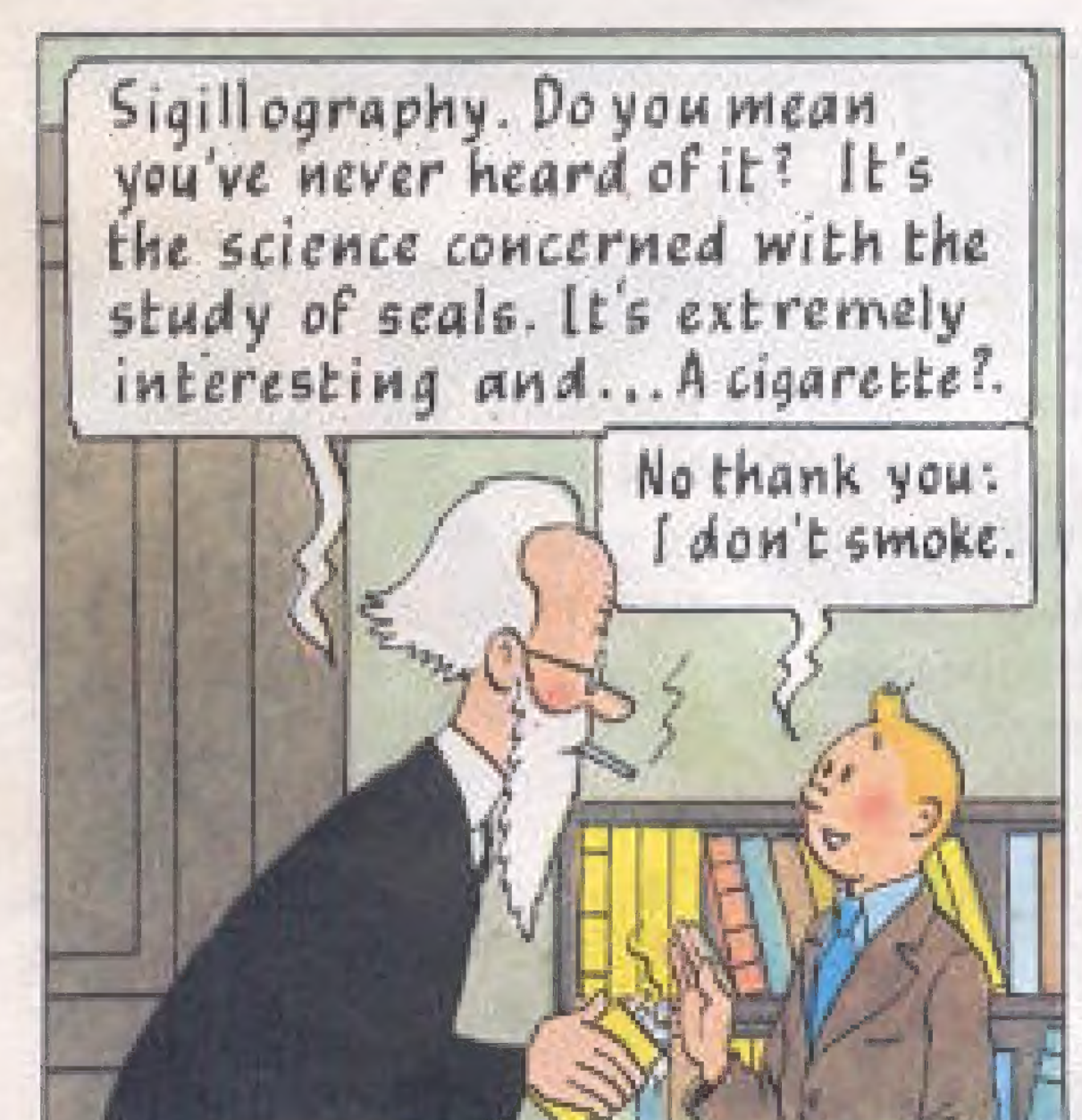
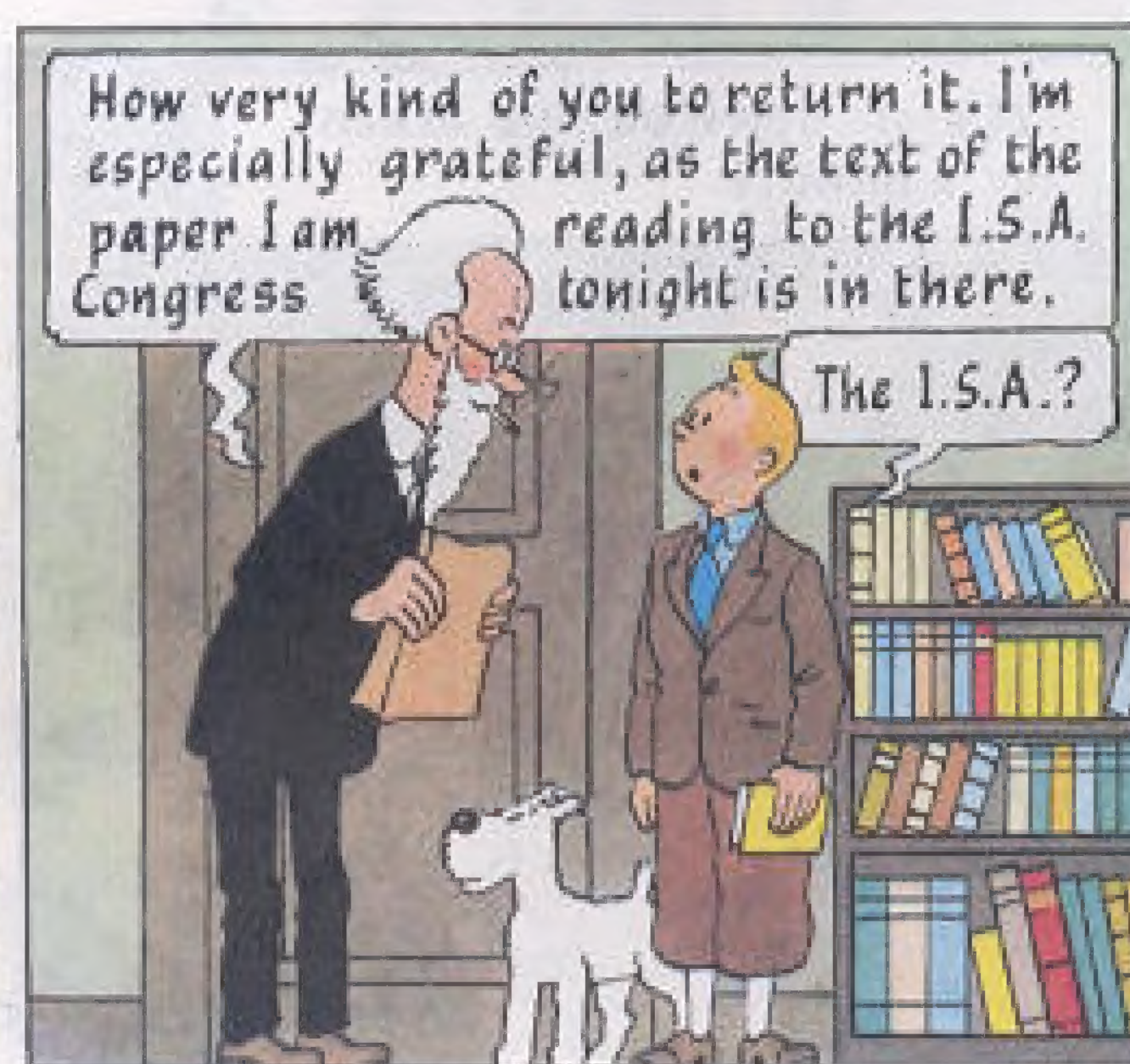
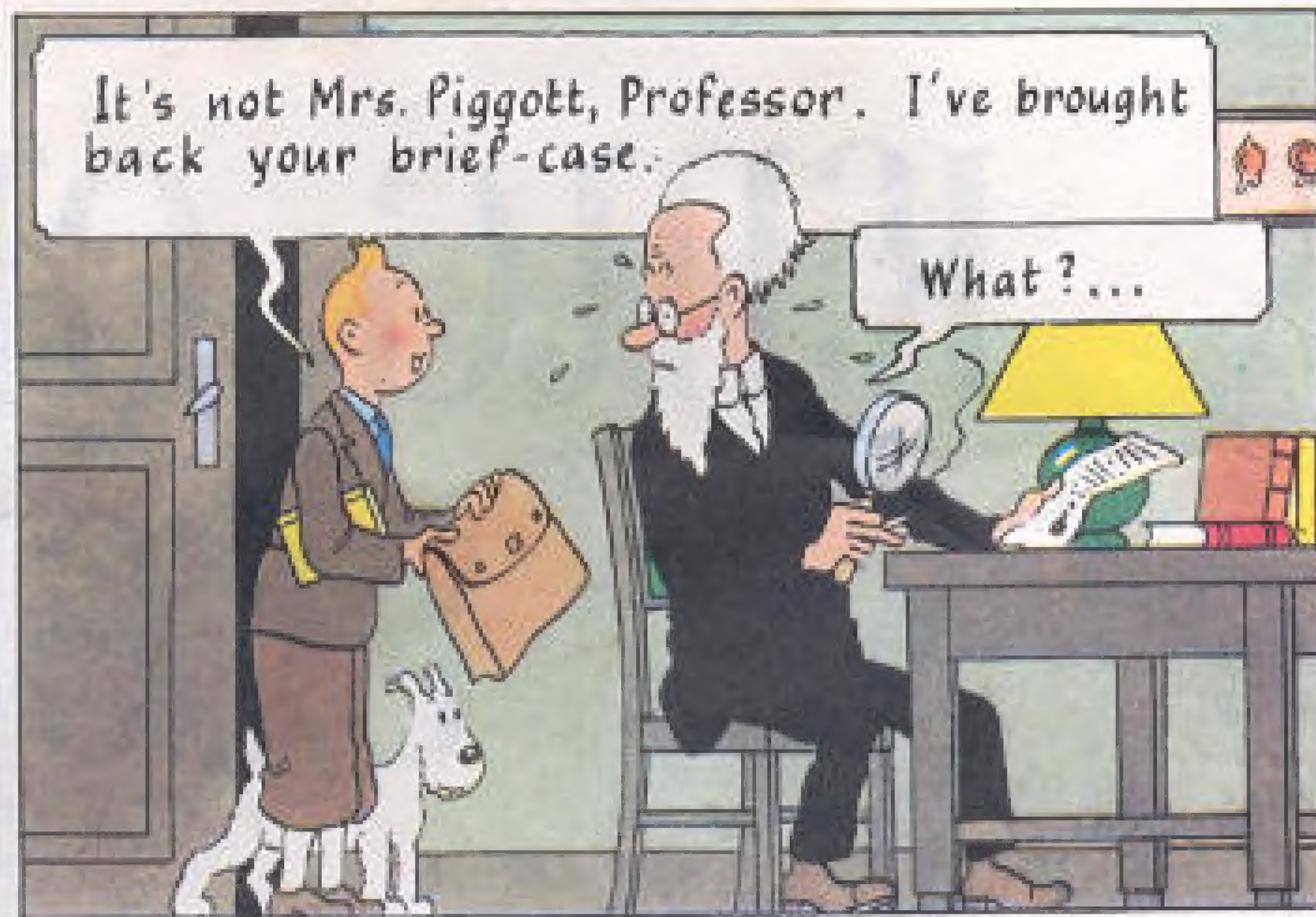
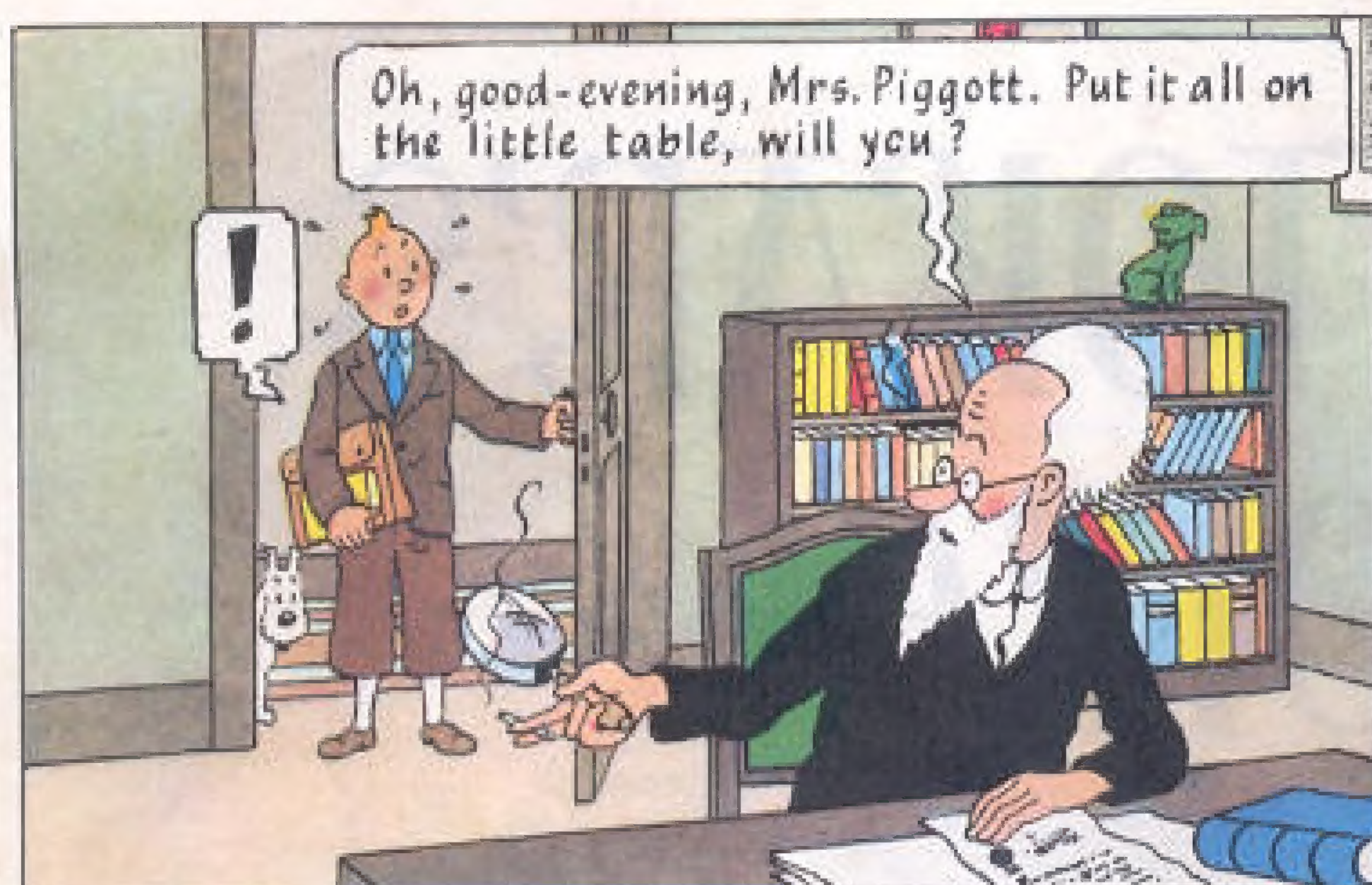




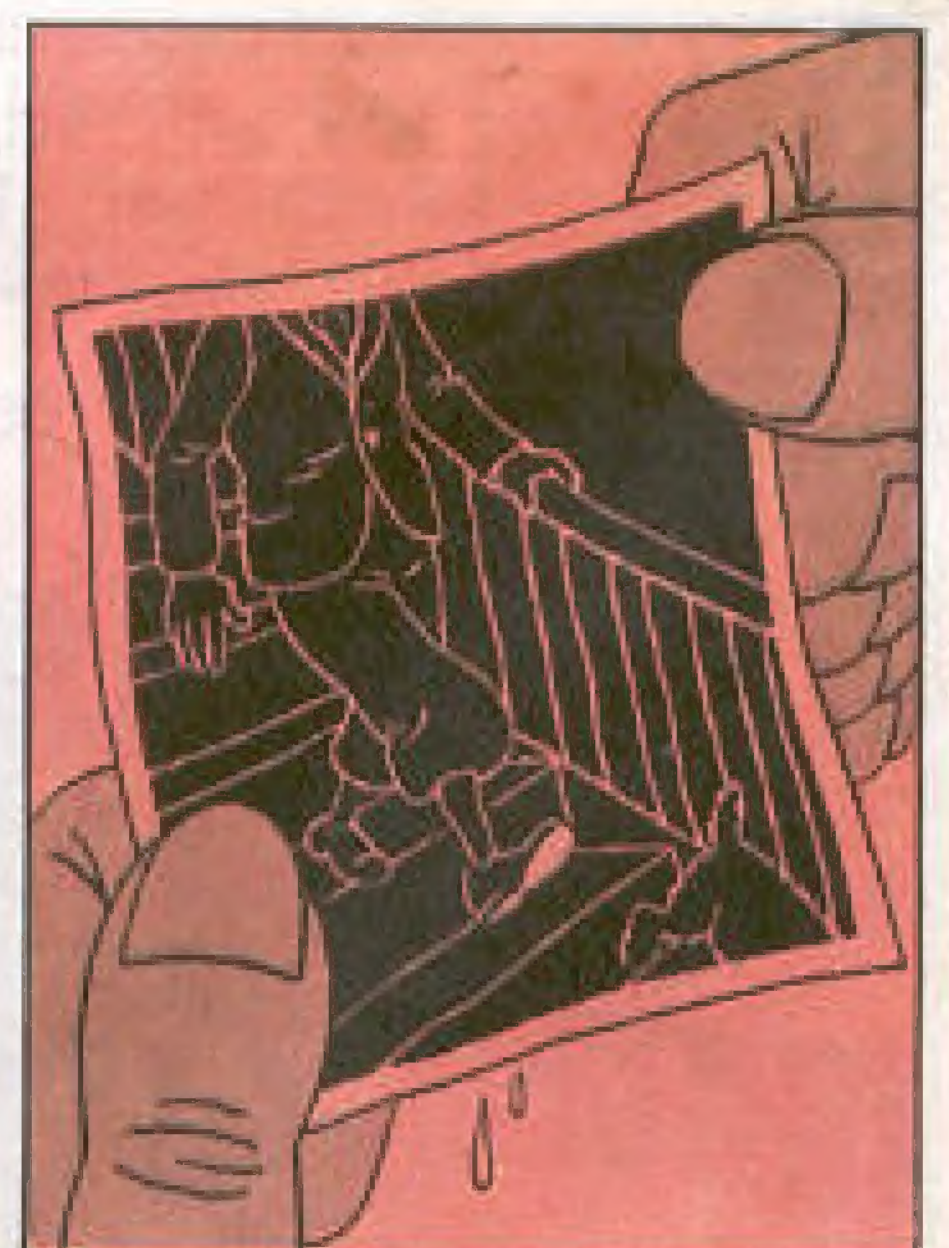
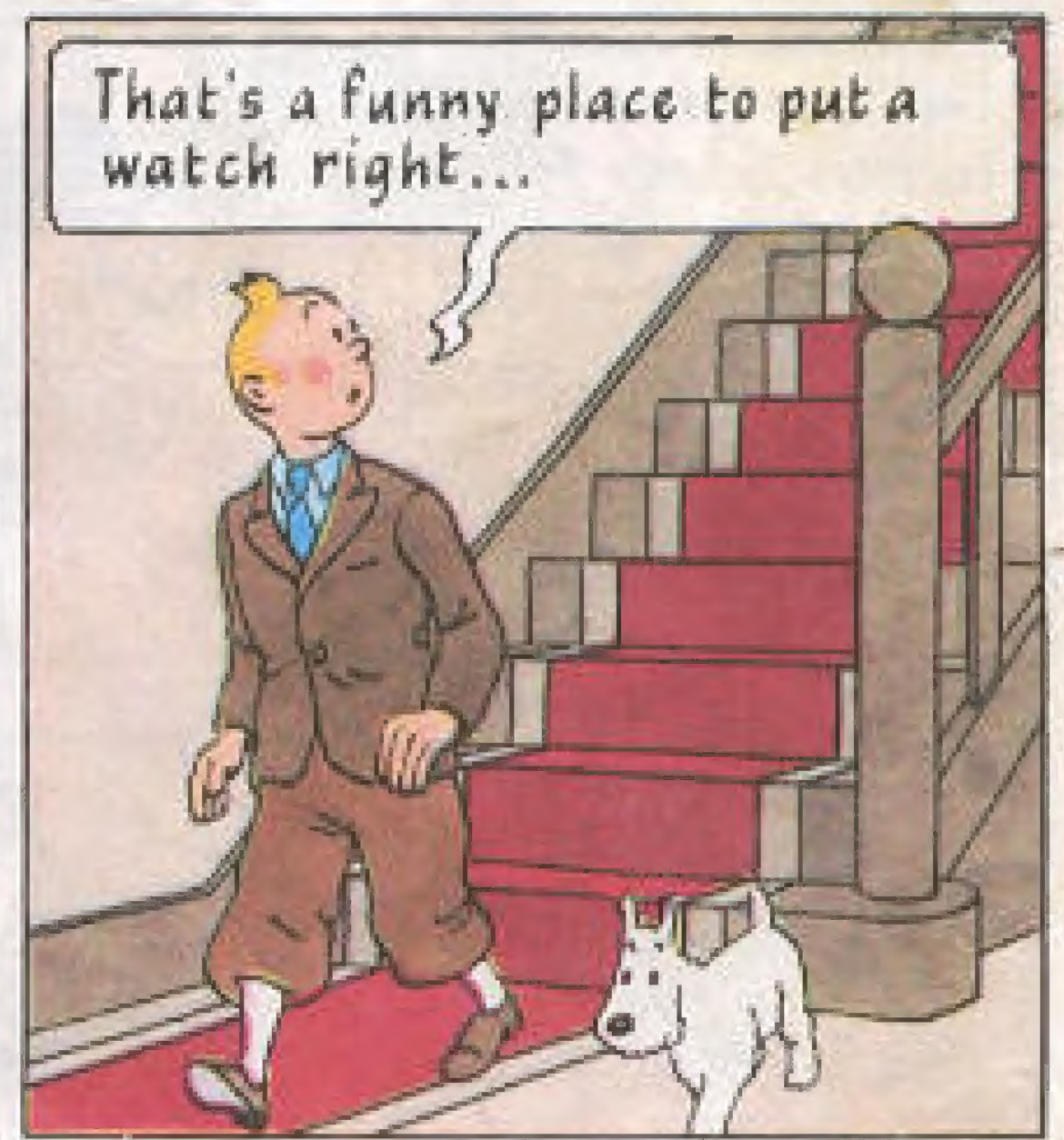
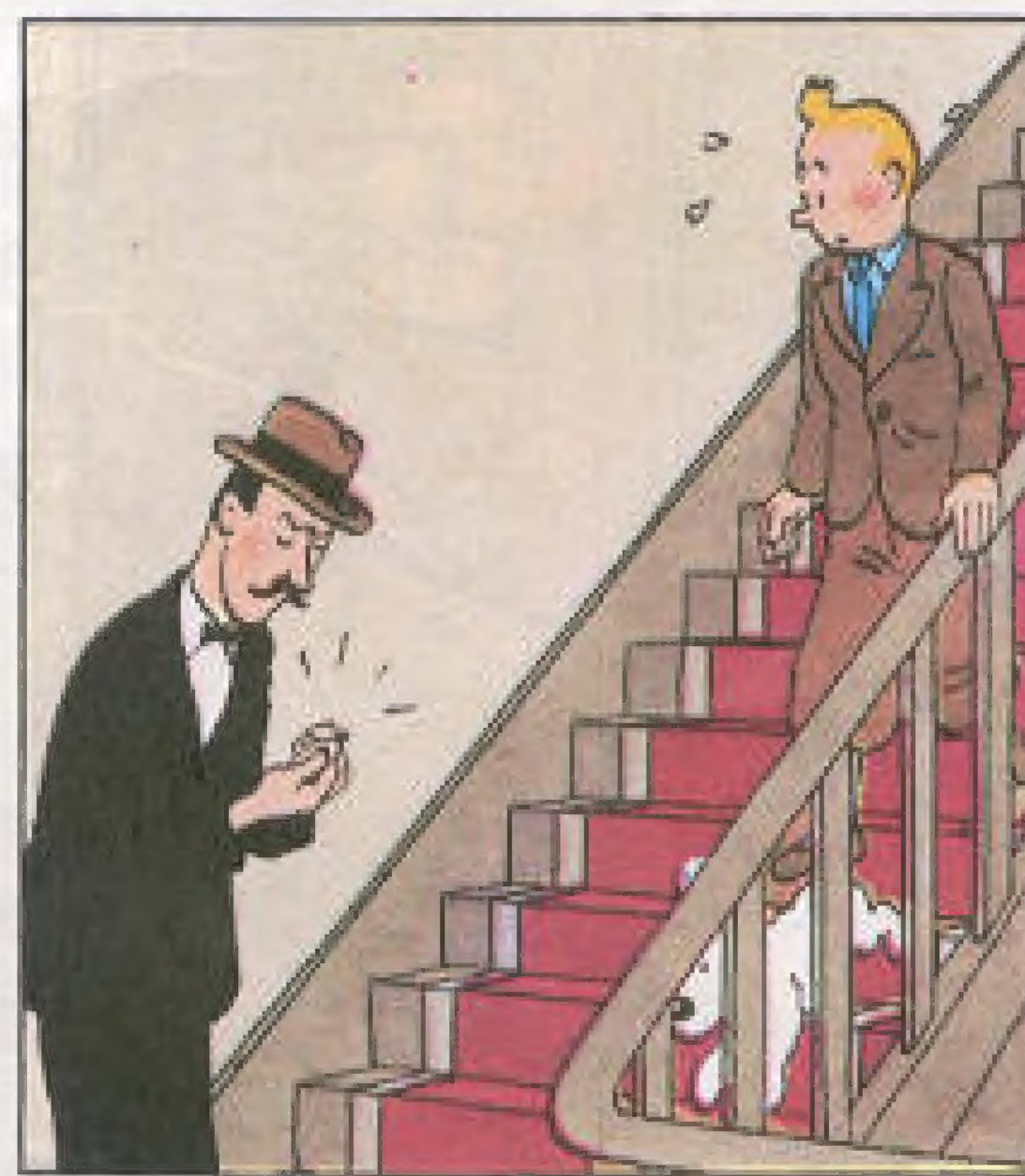
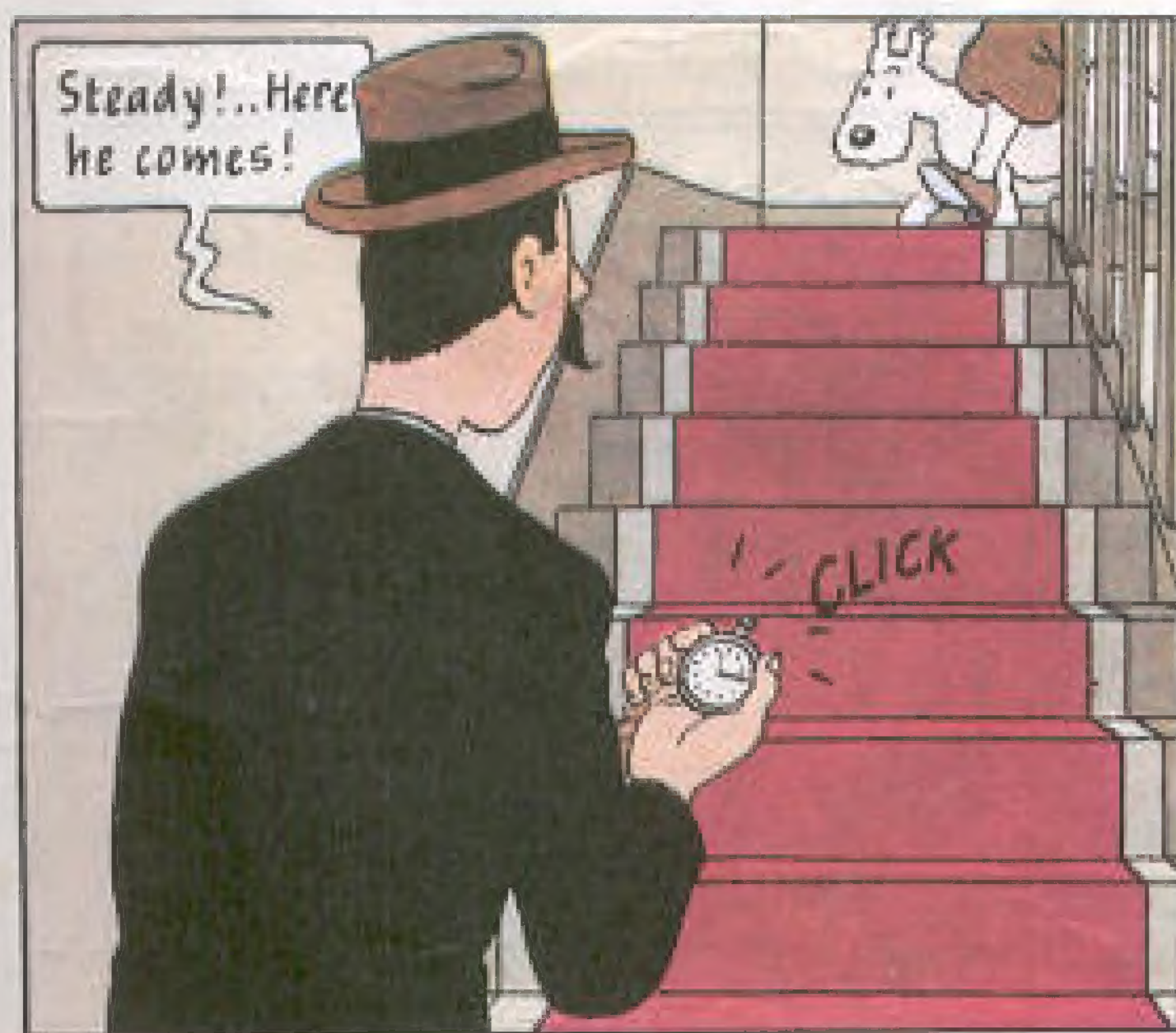
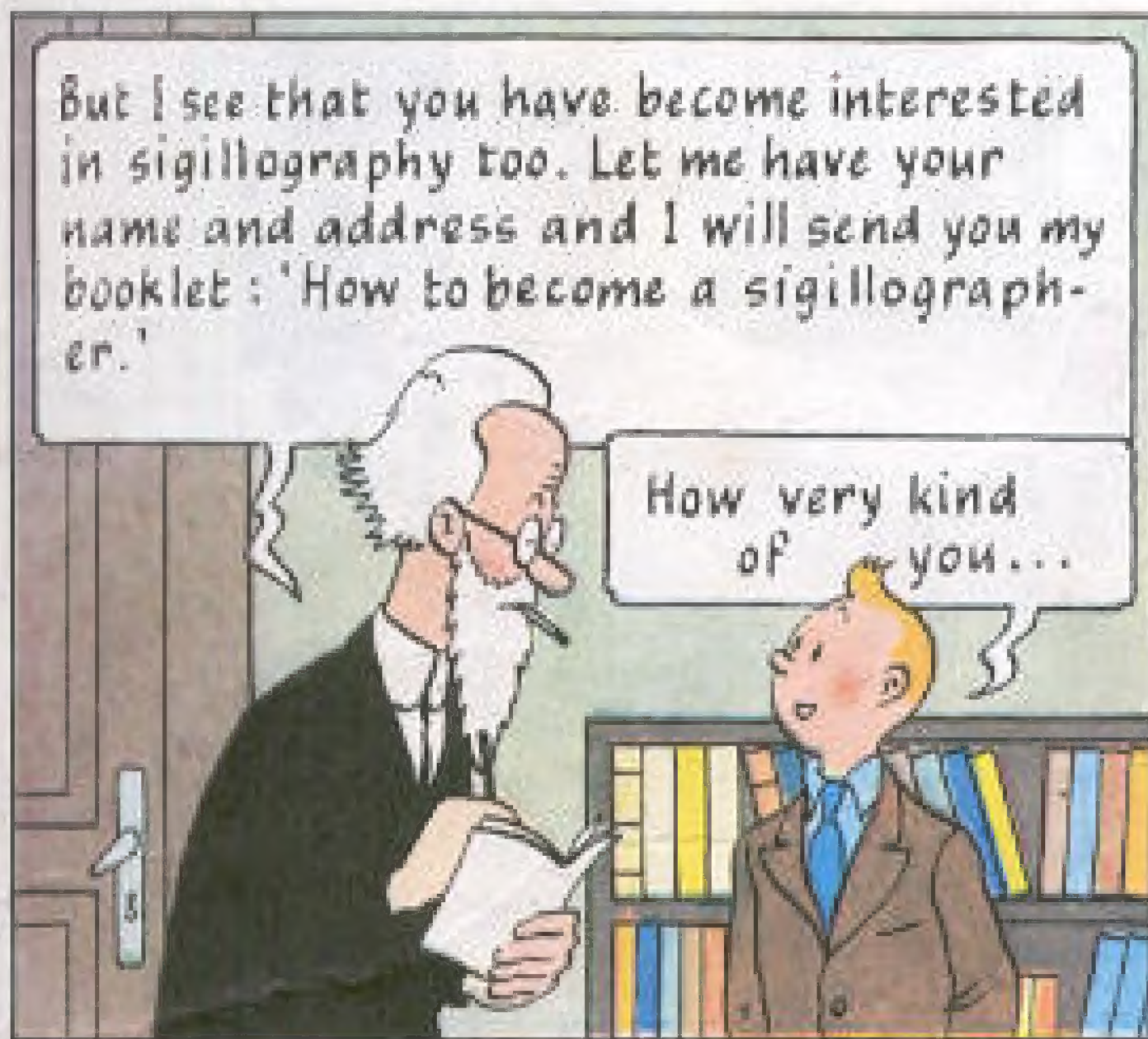
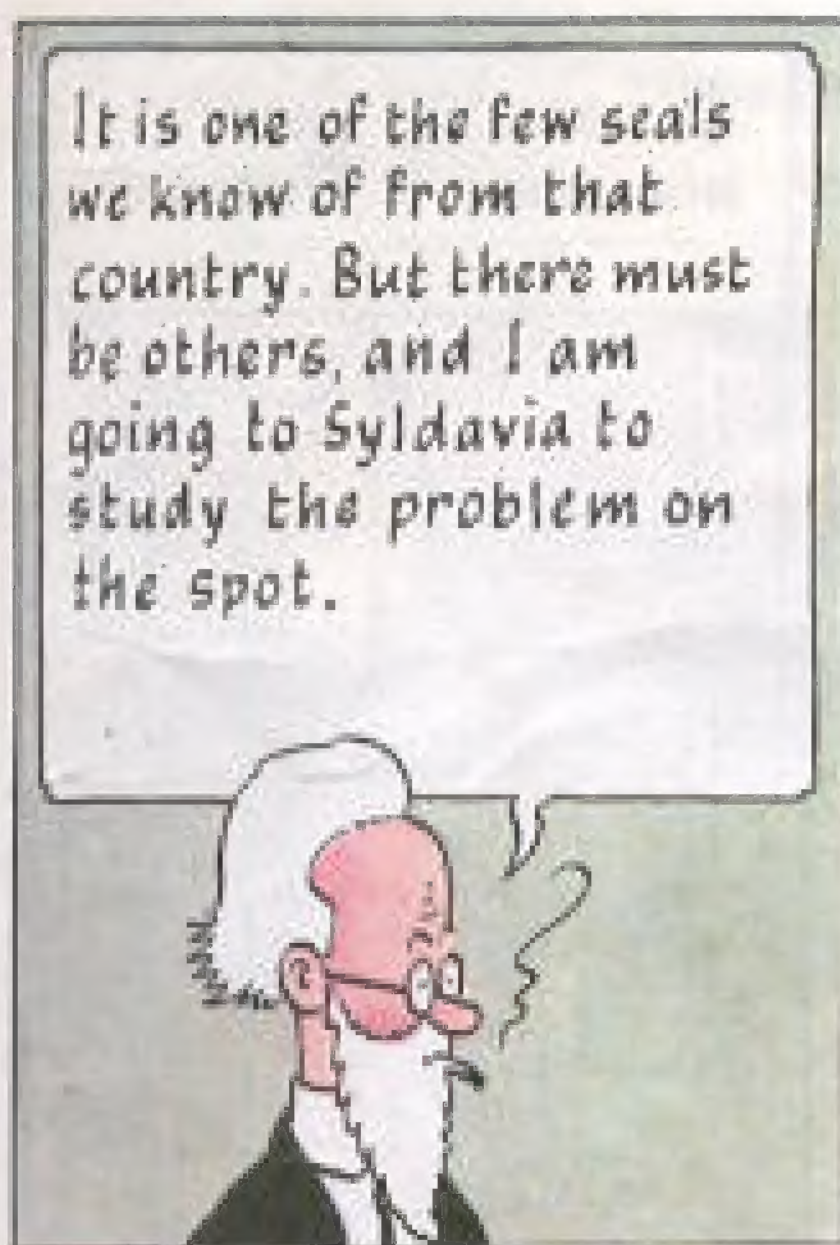
# KING OTTOKAR'S SCEPTRE



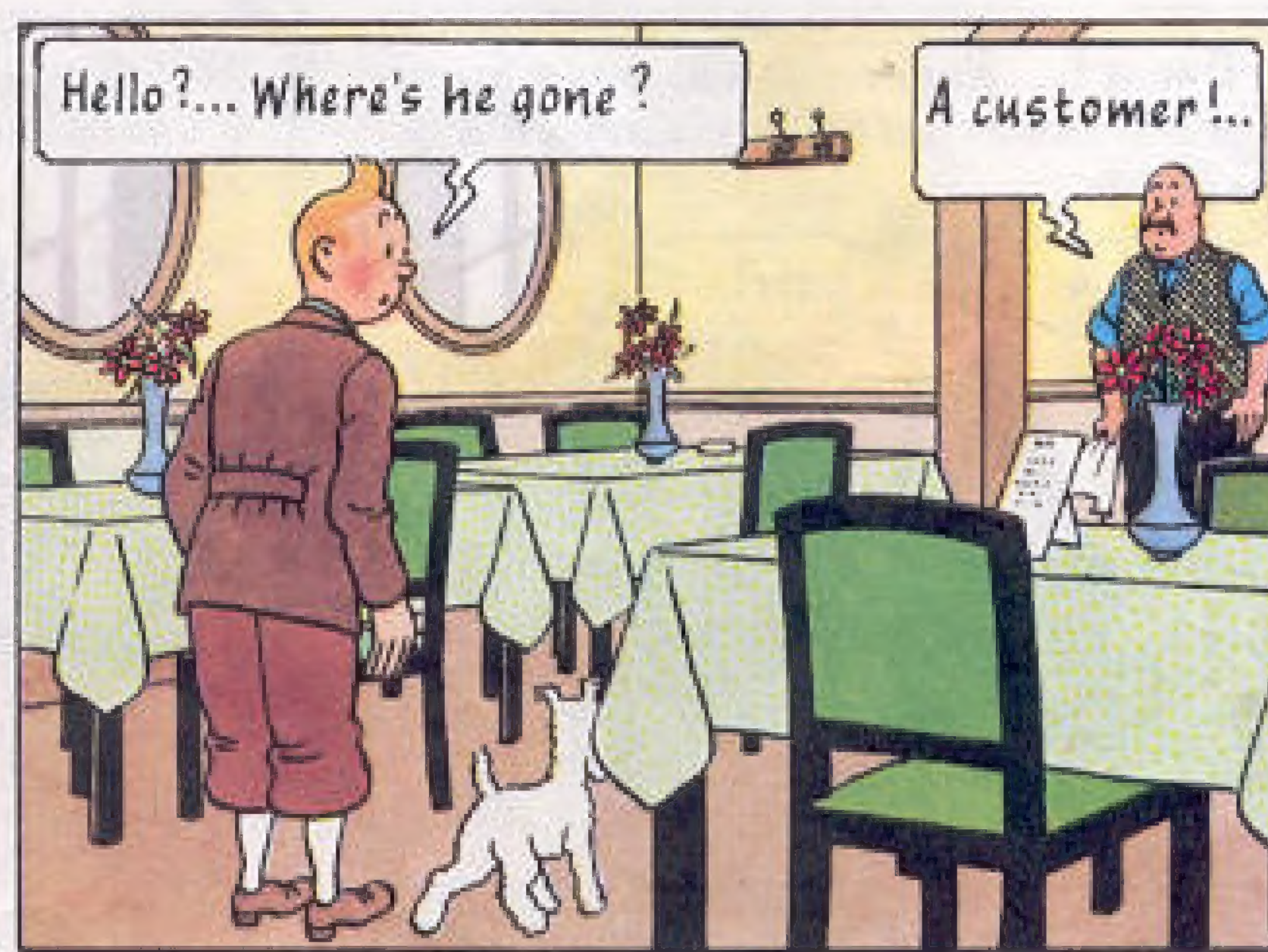
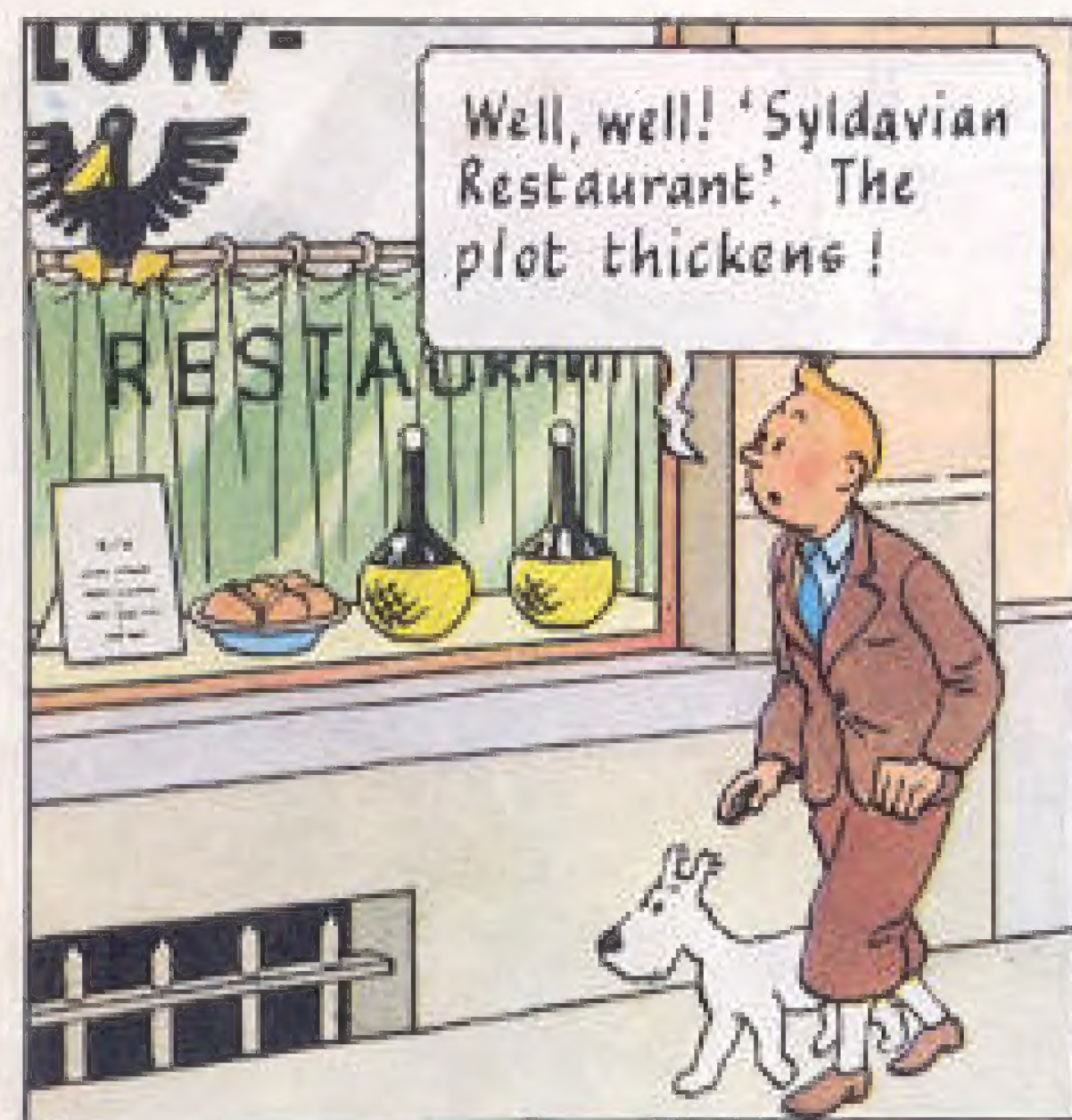
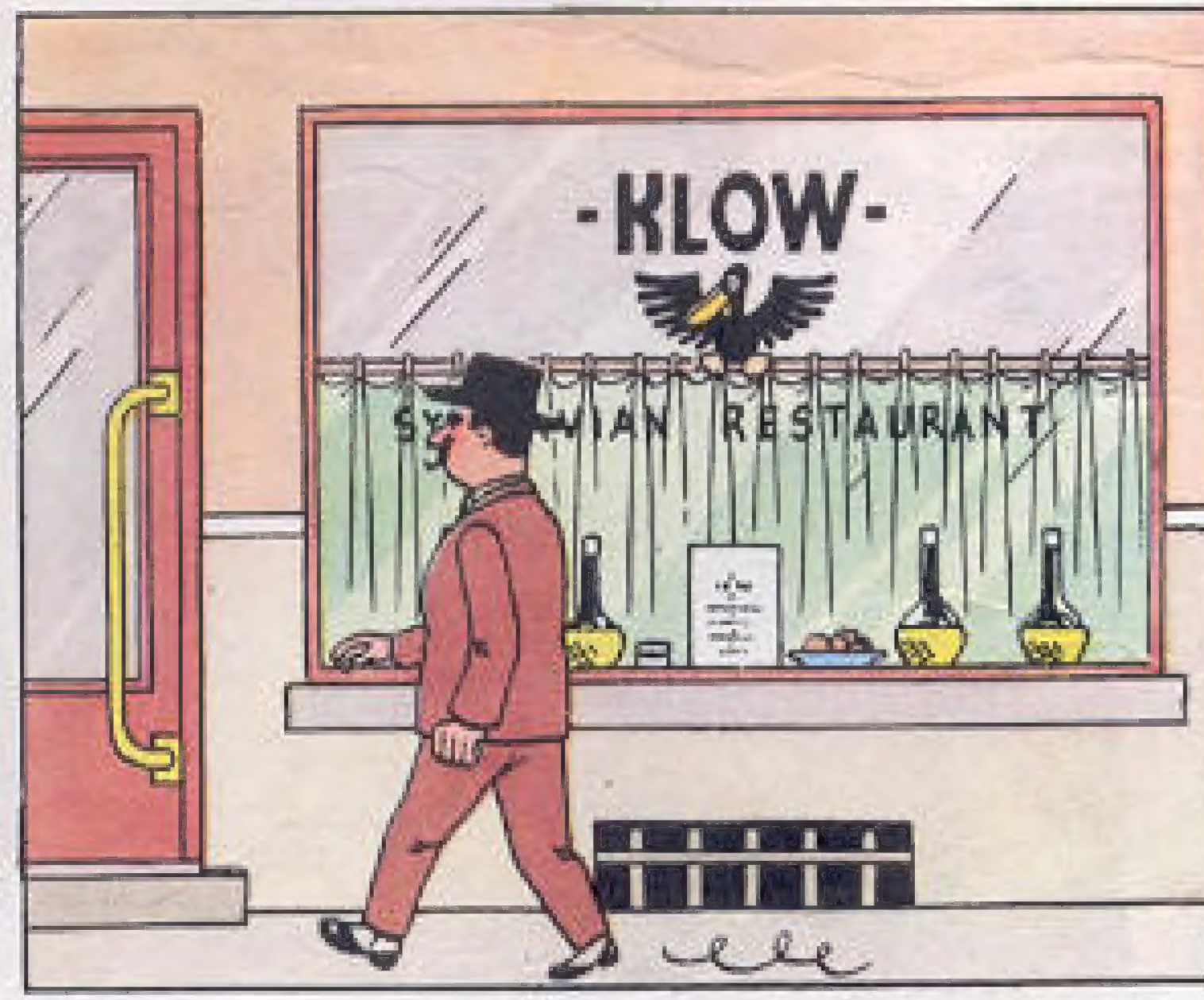
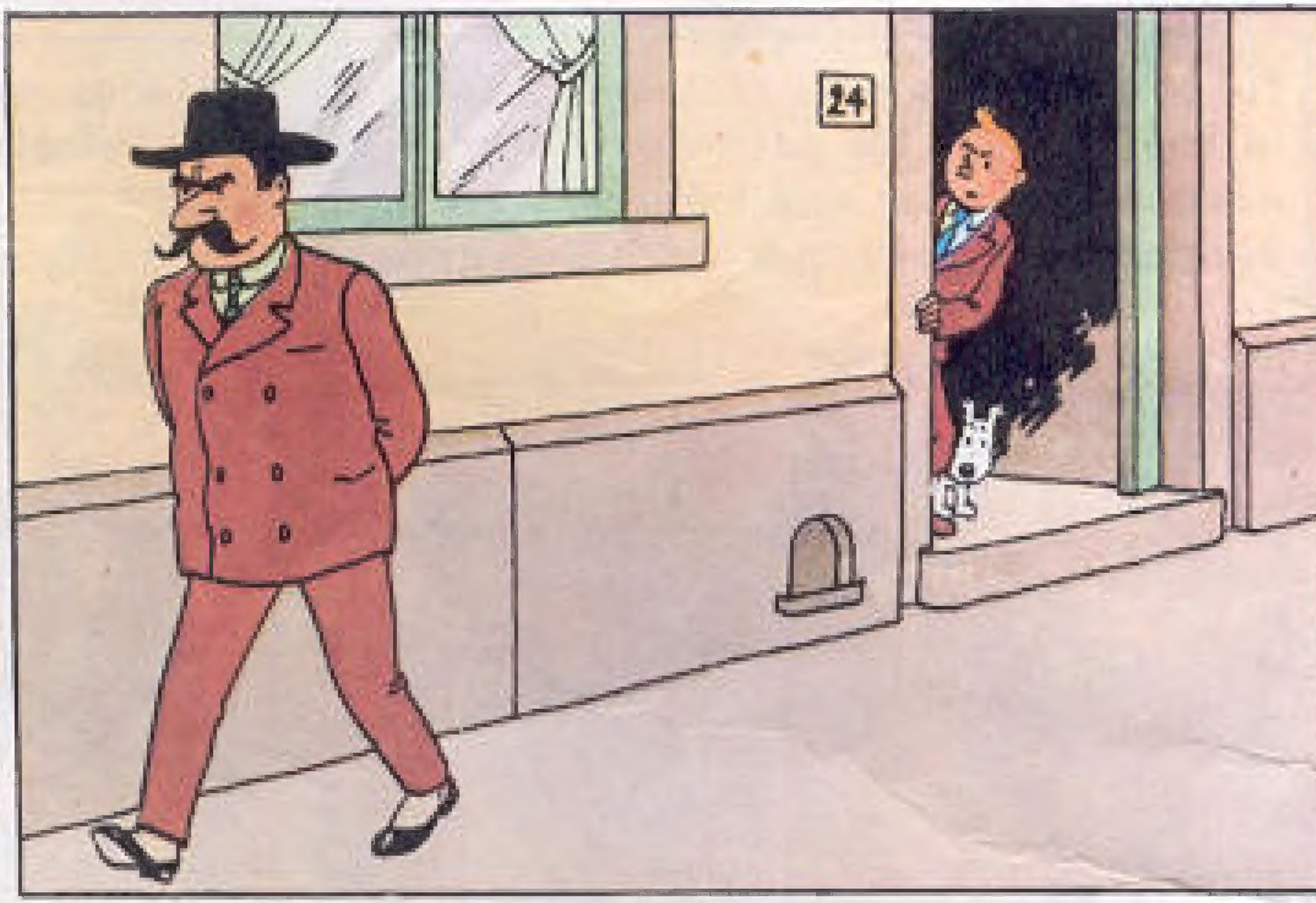
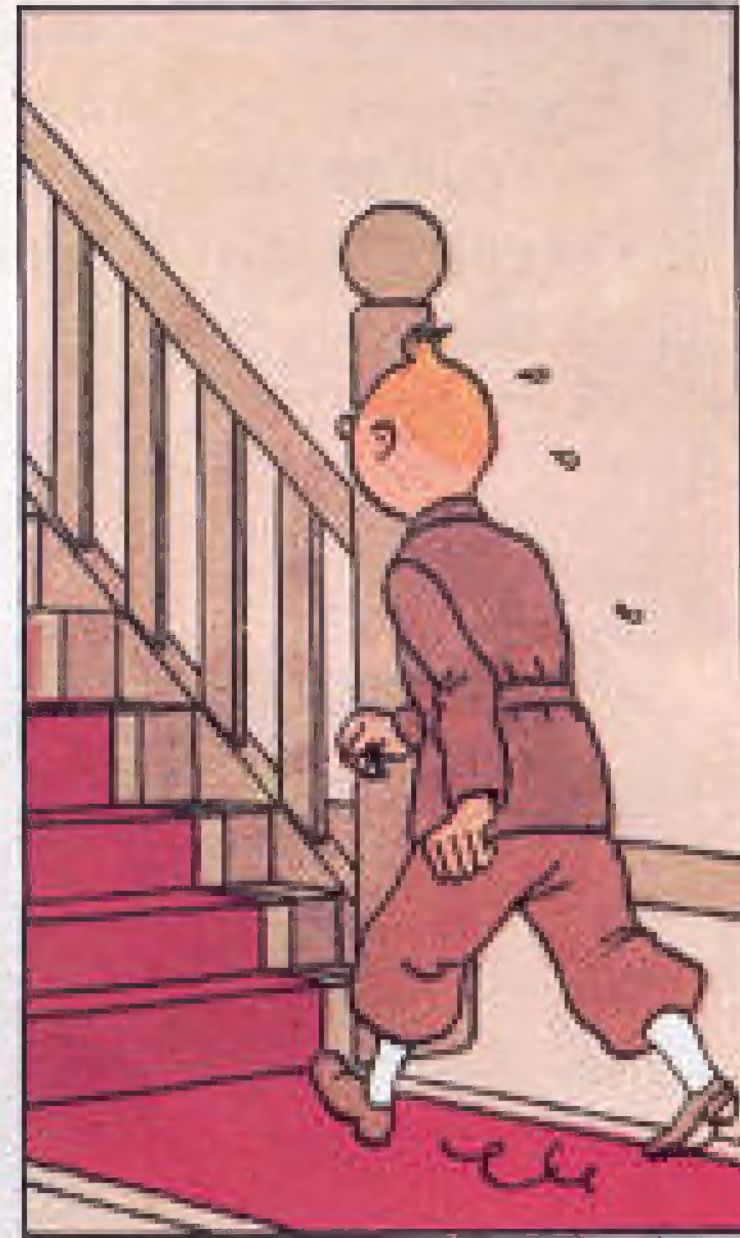
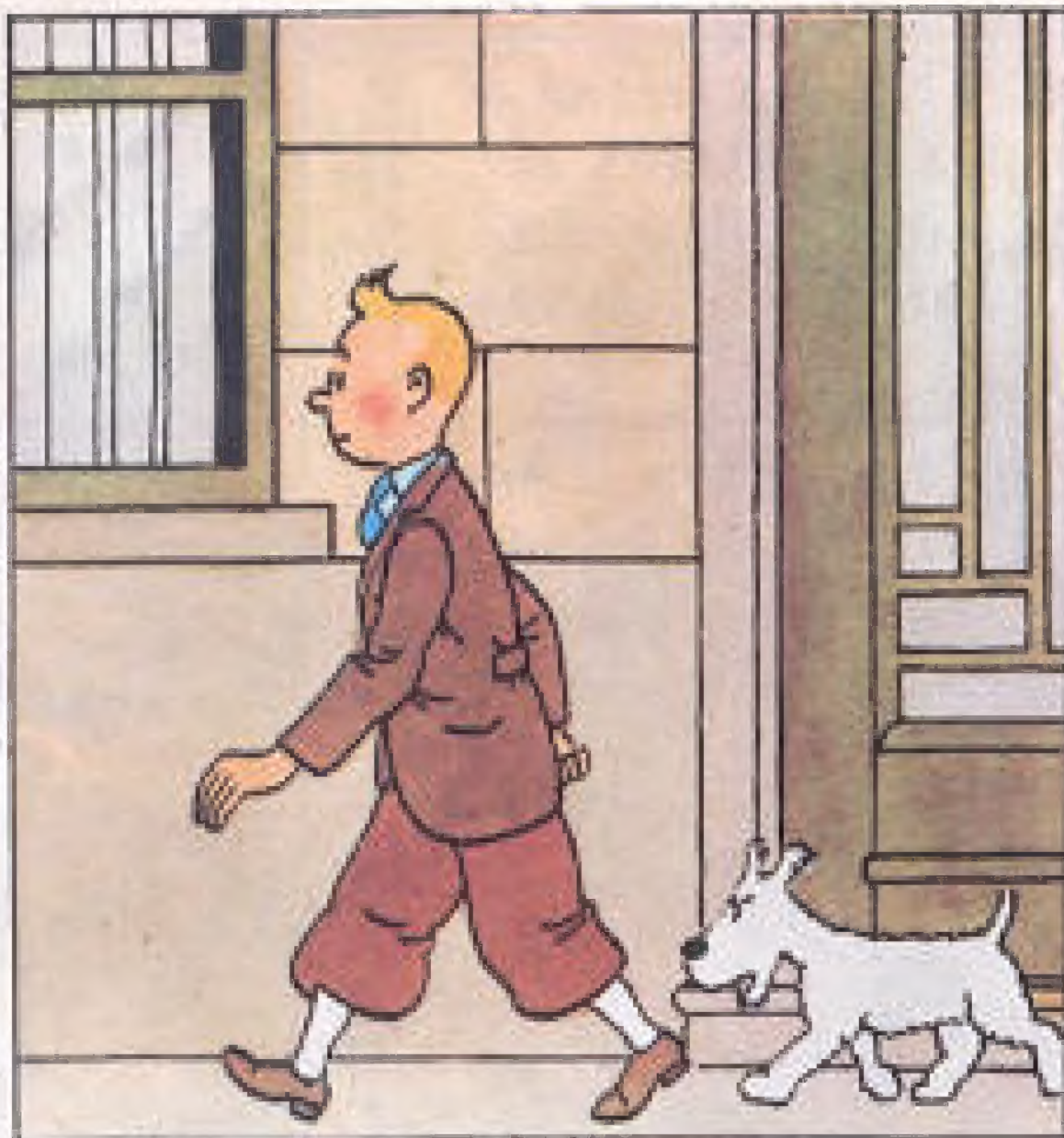
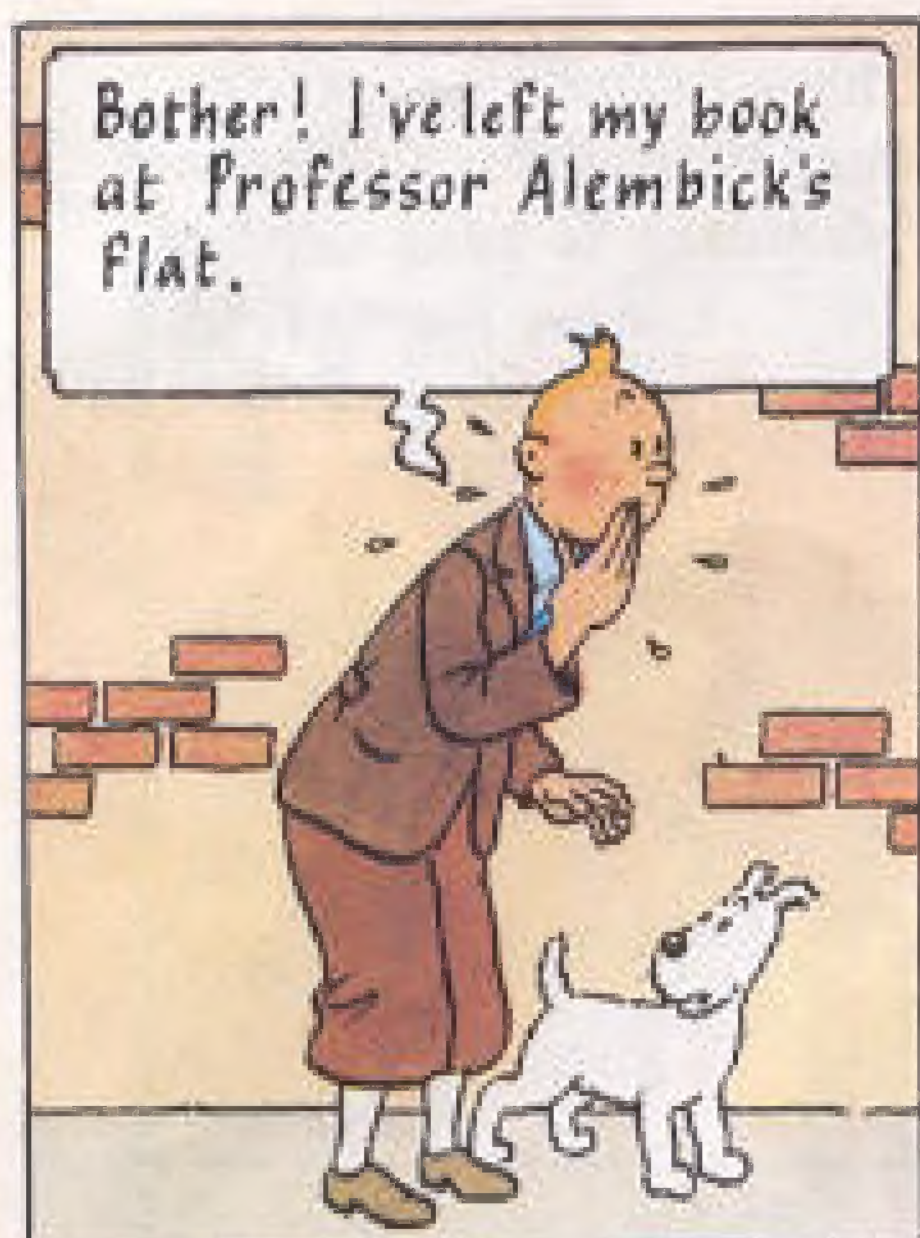




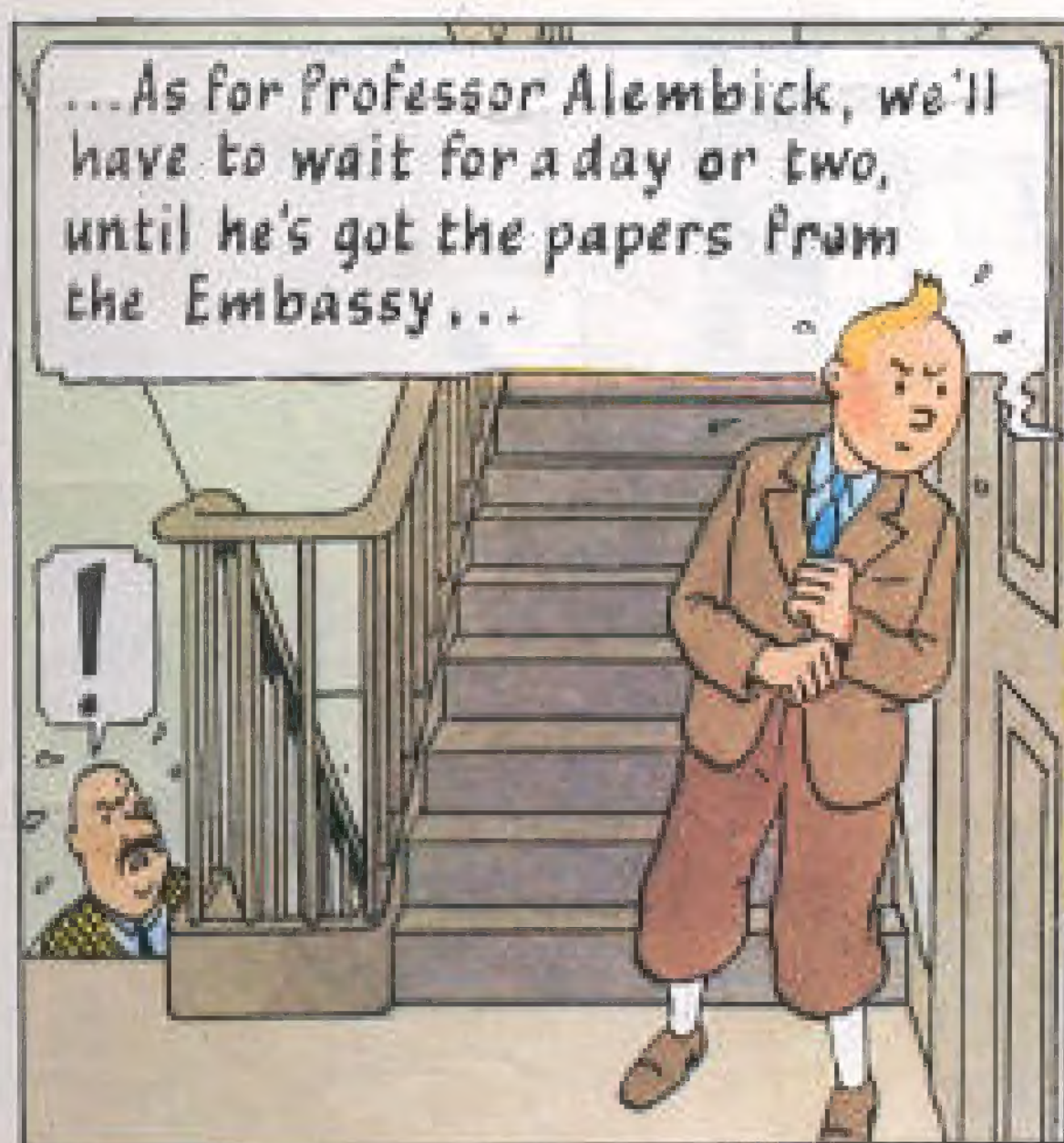
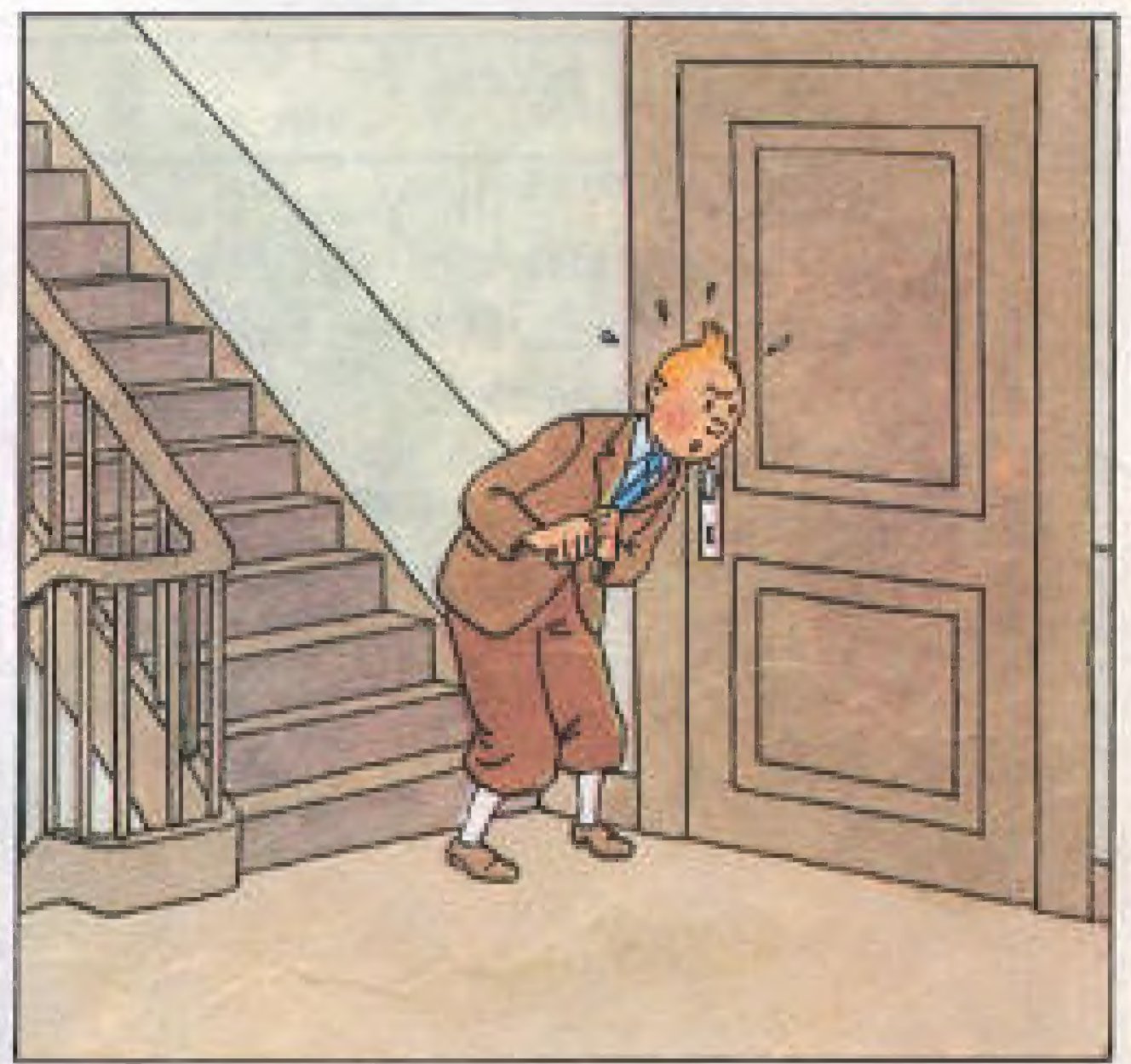
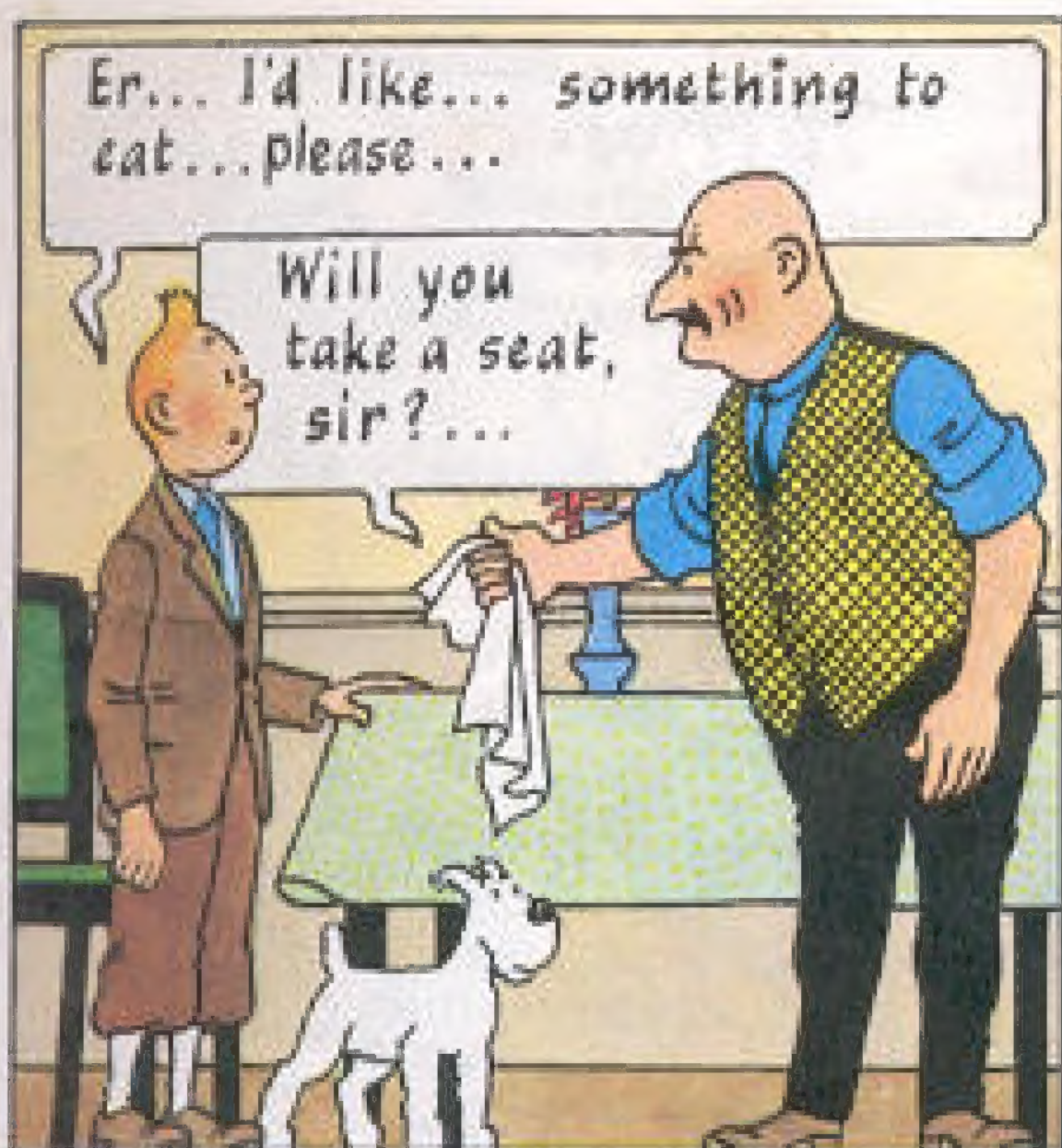




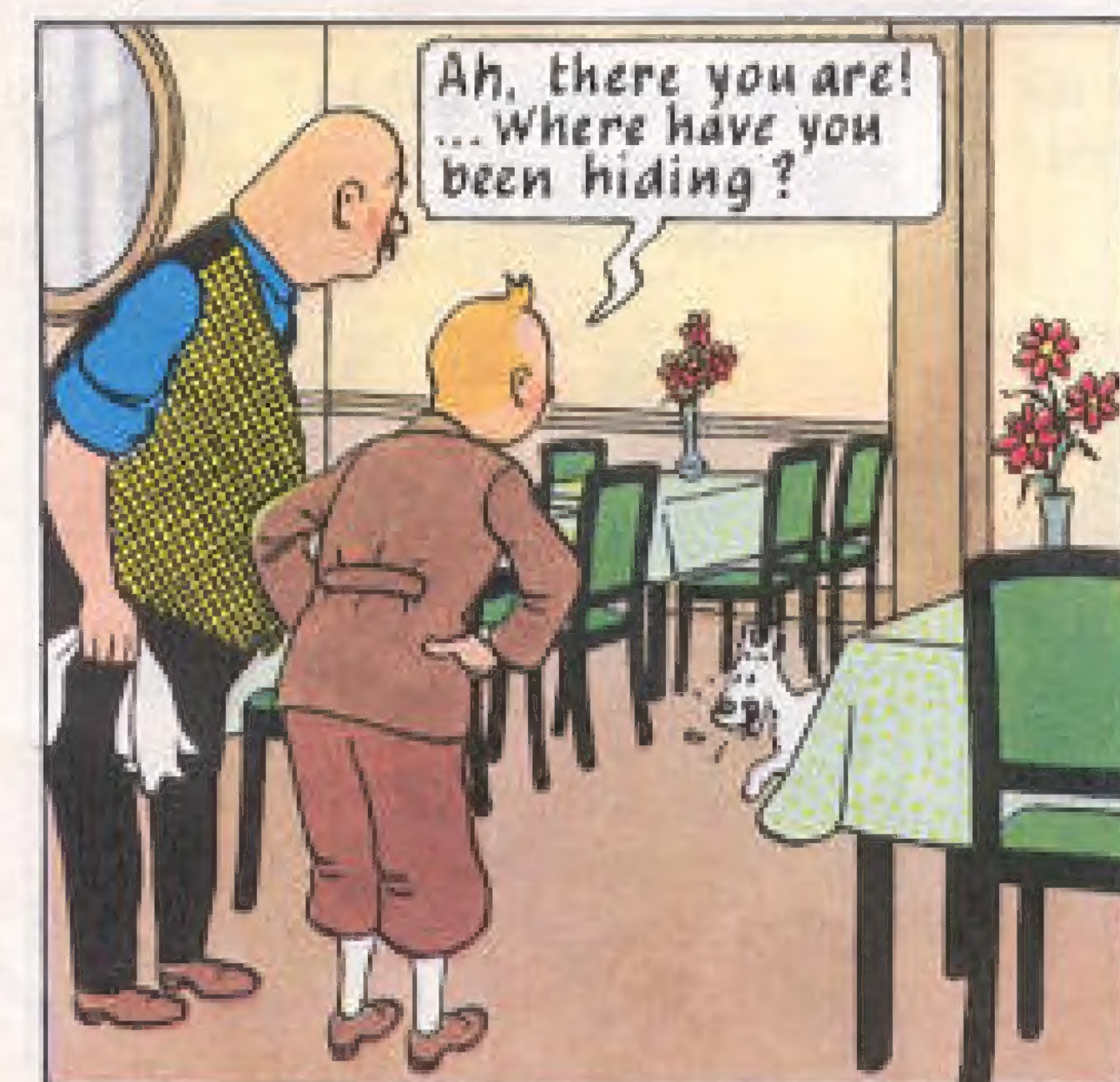
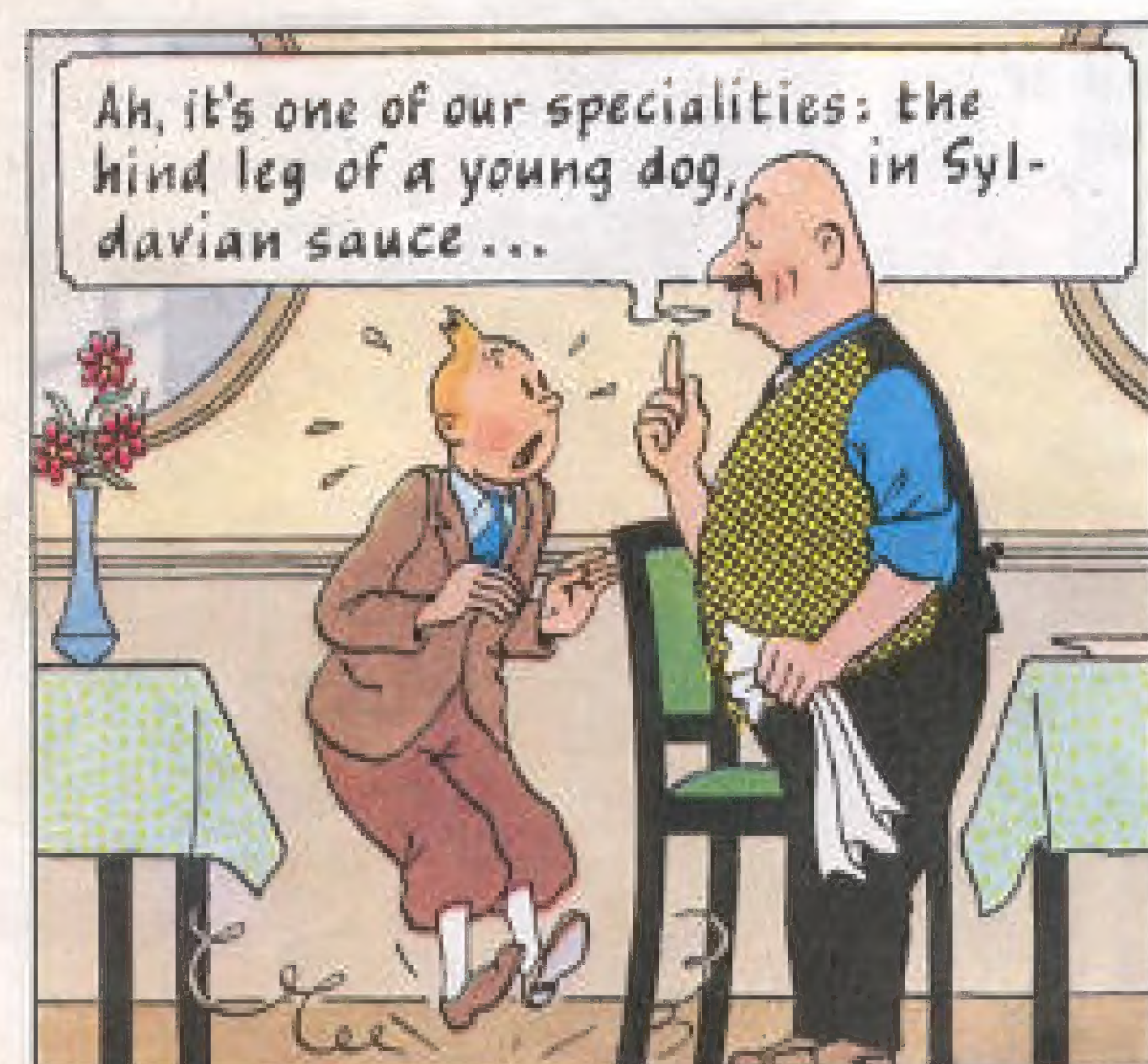
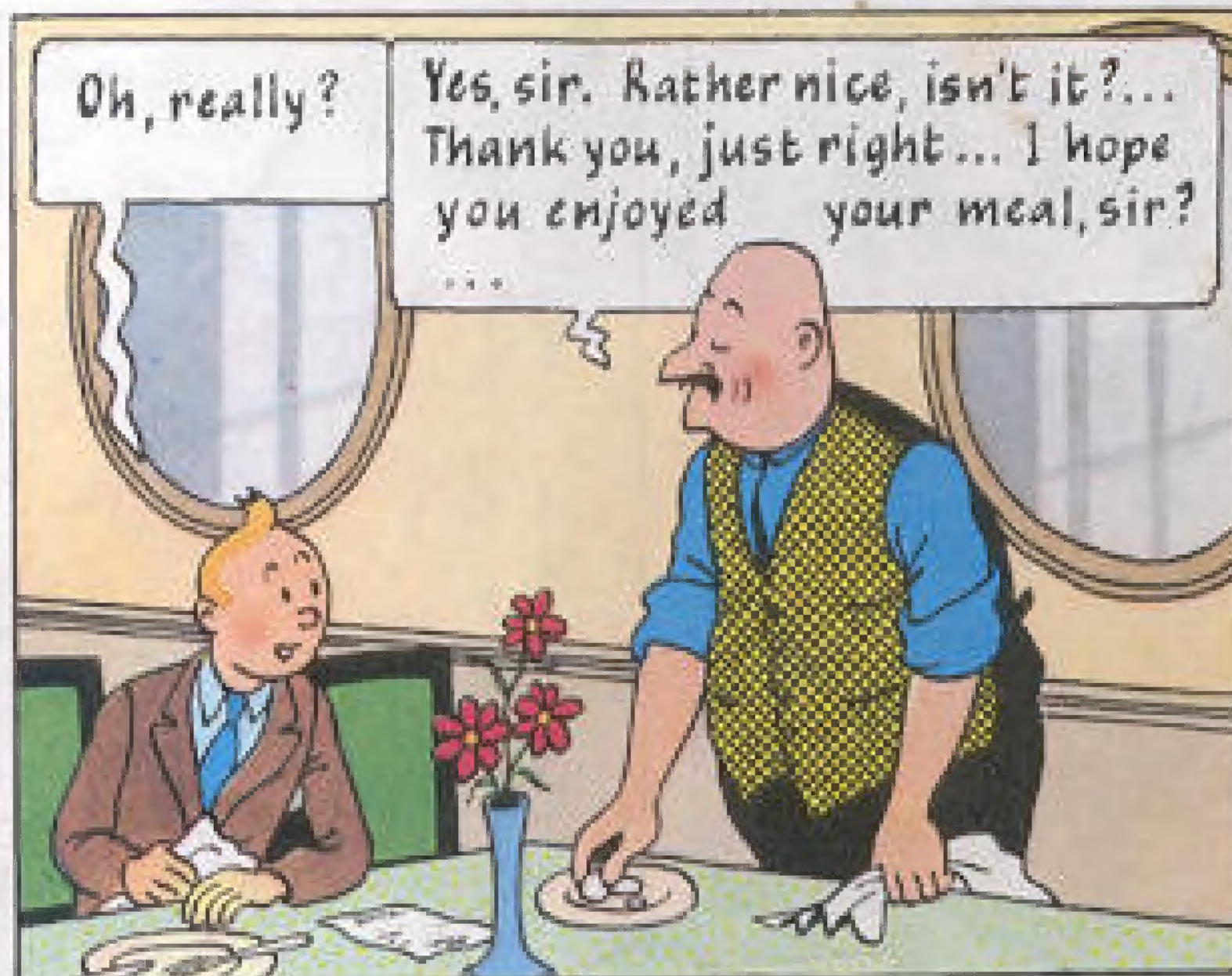
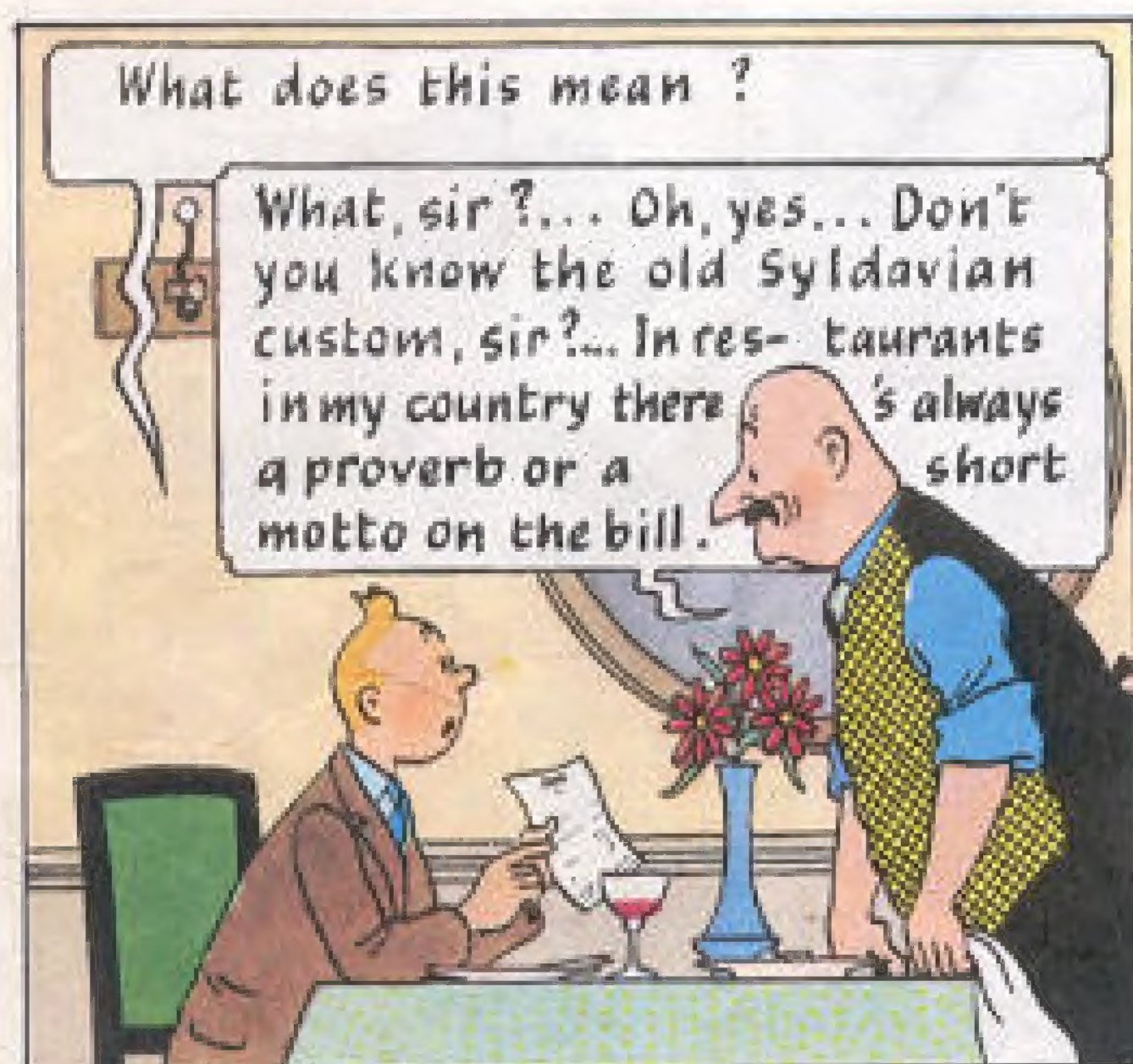
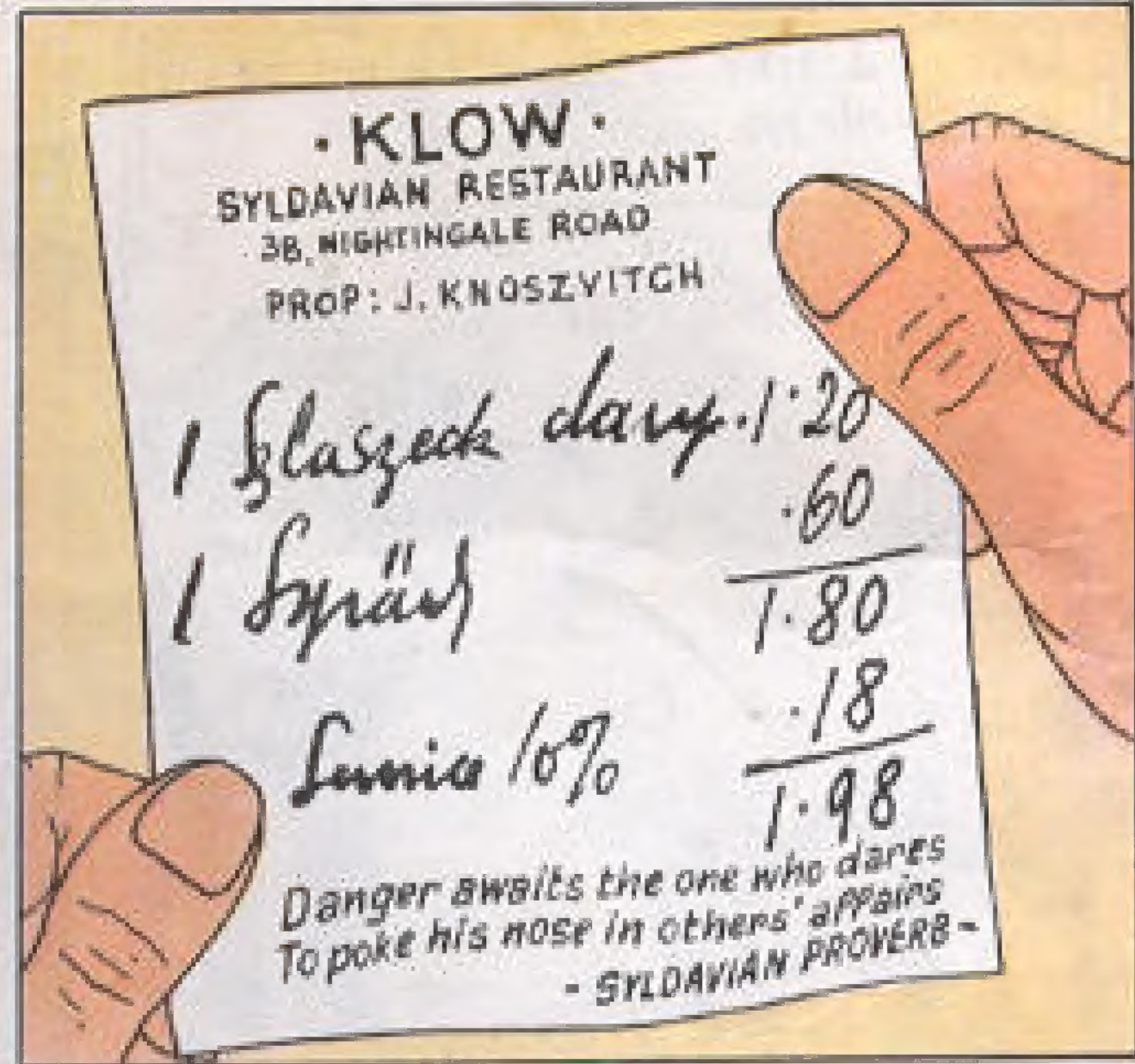
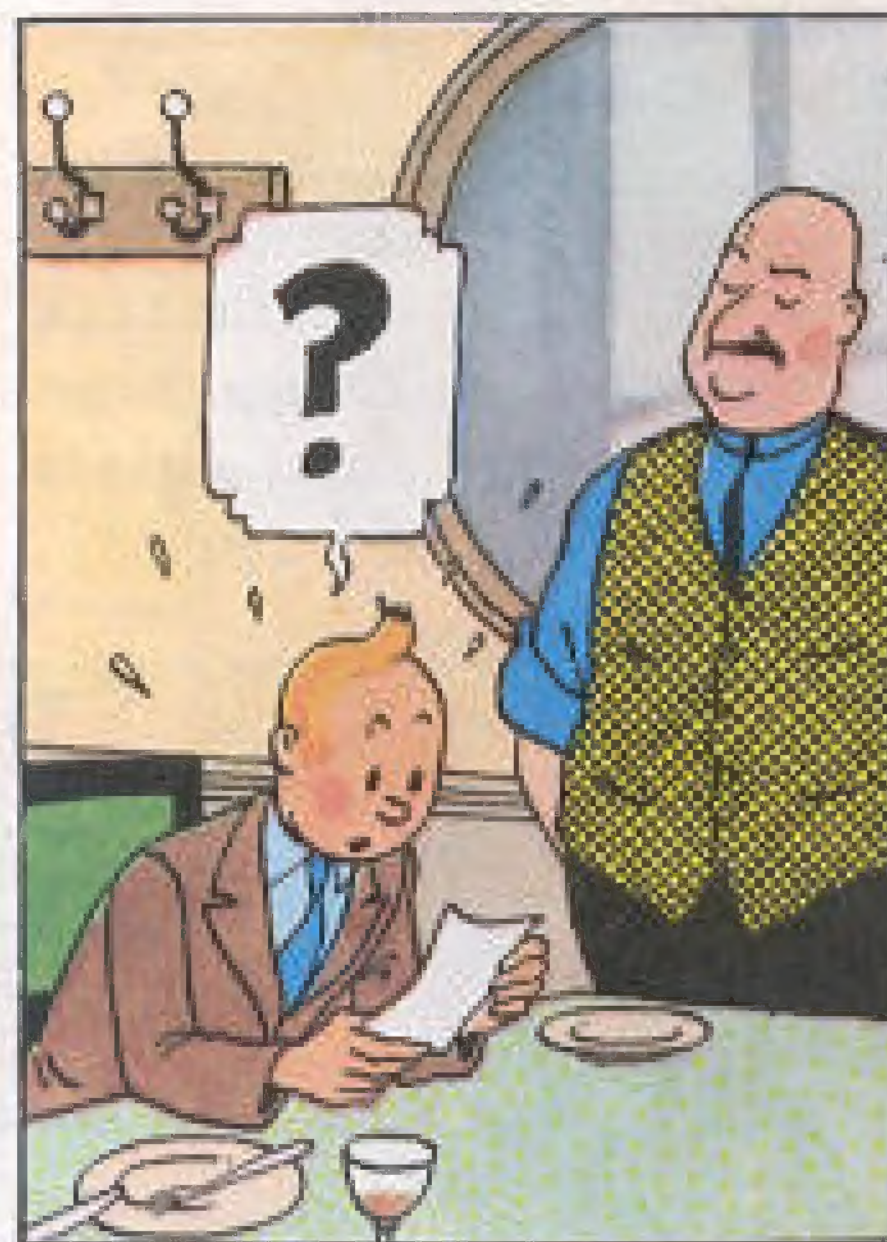
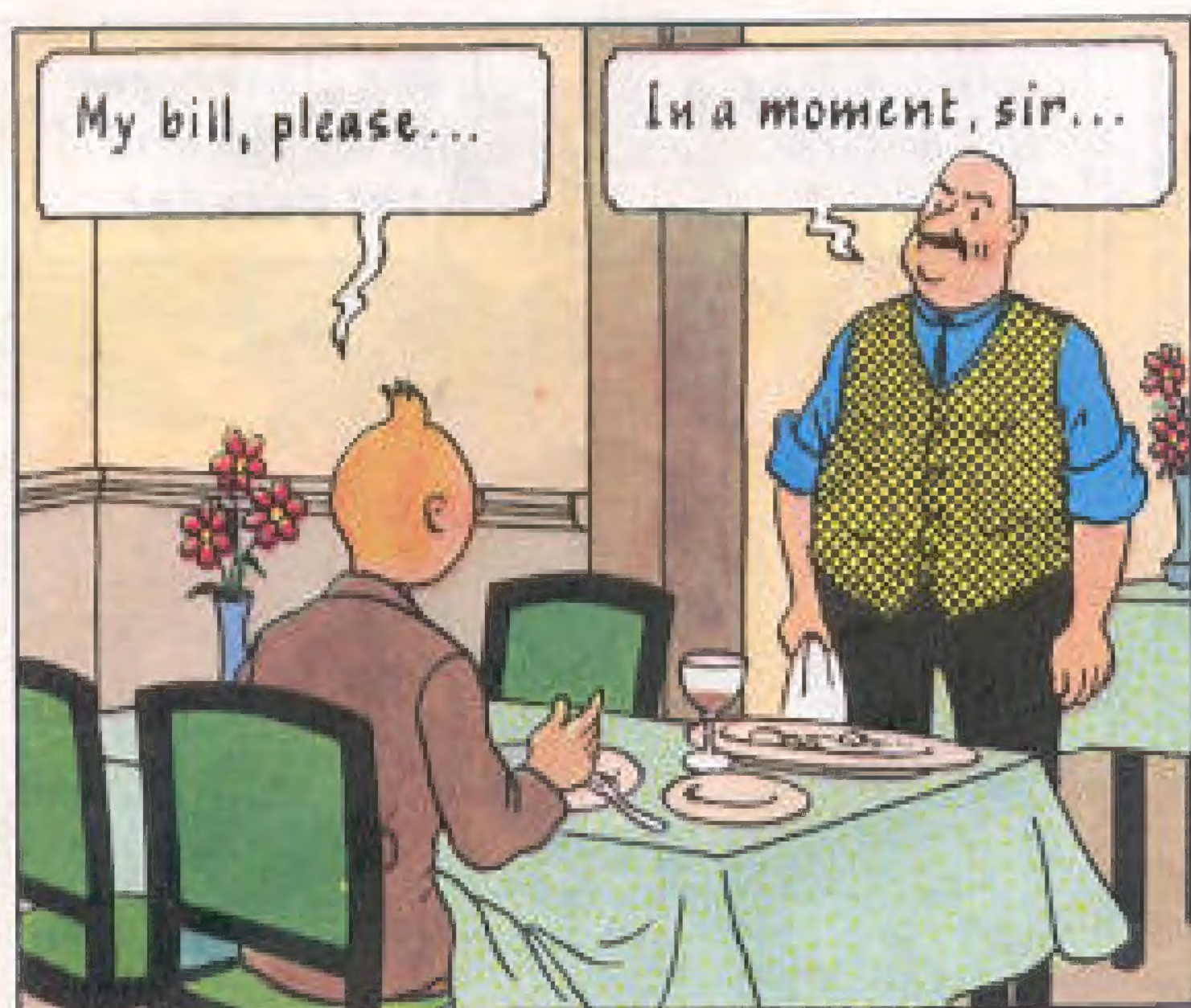




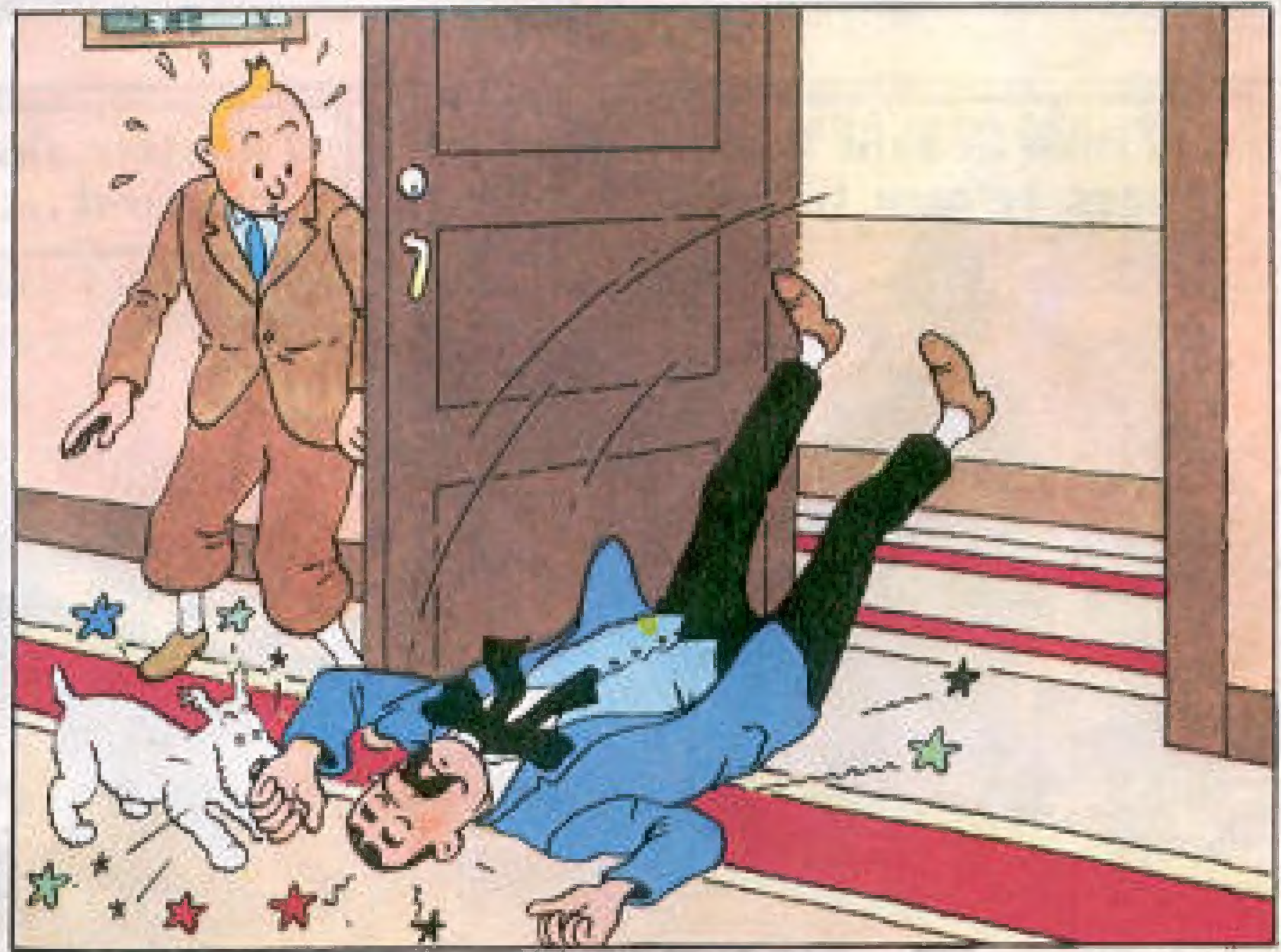
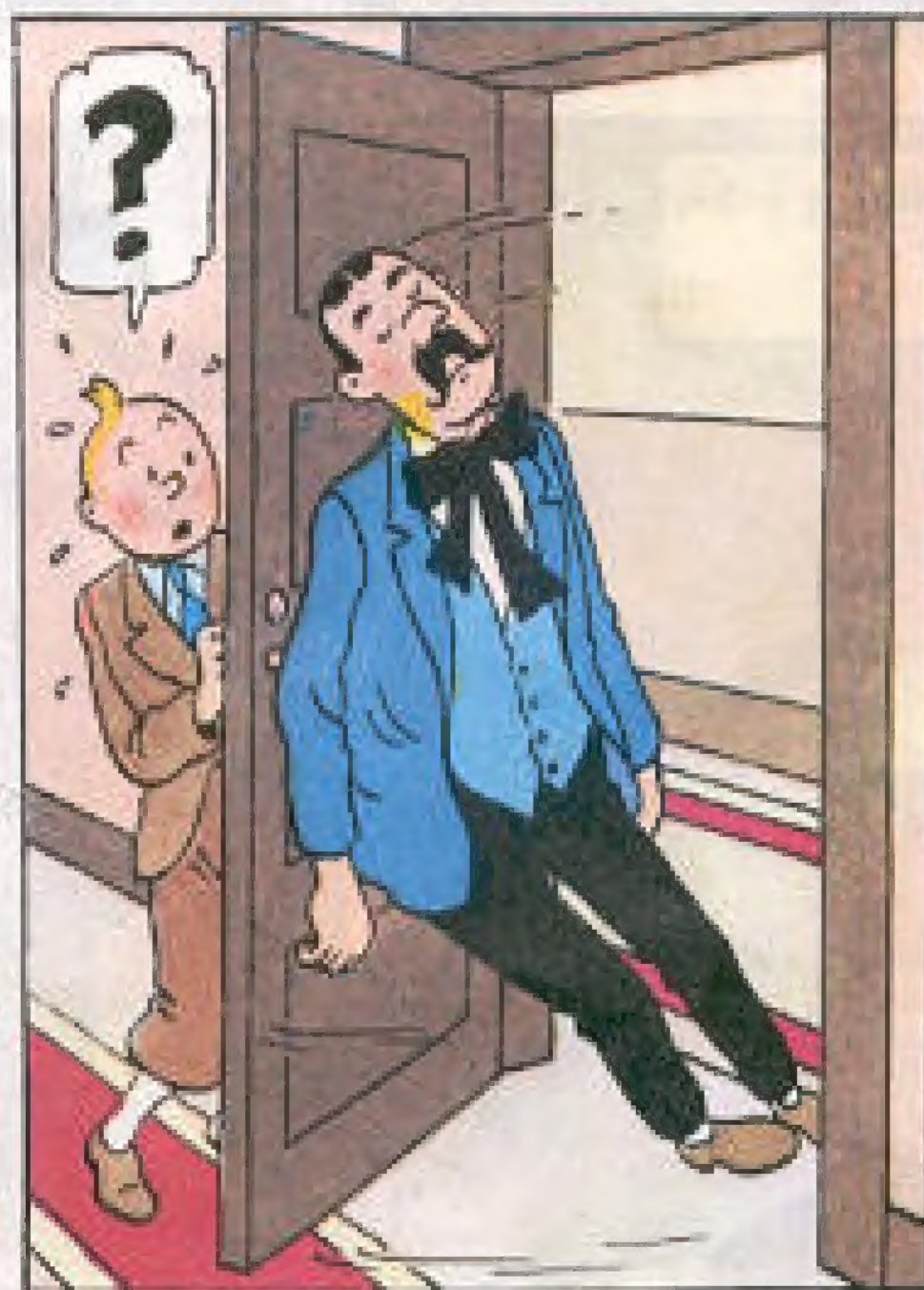
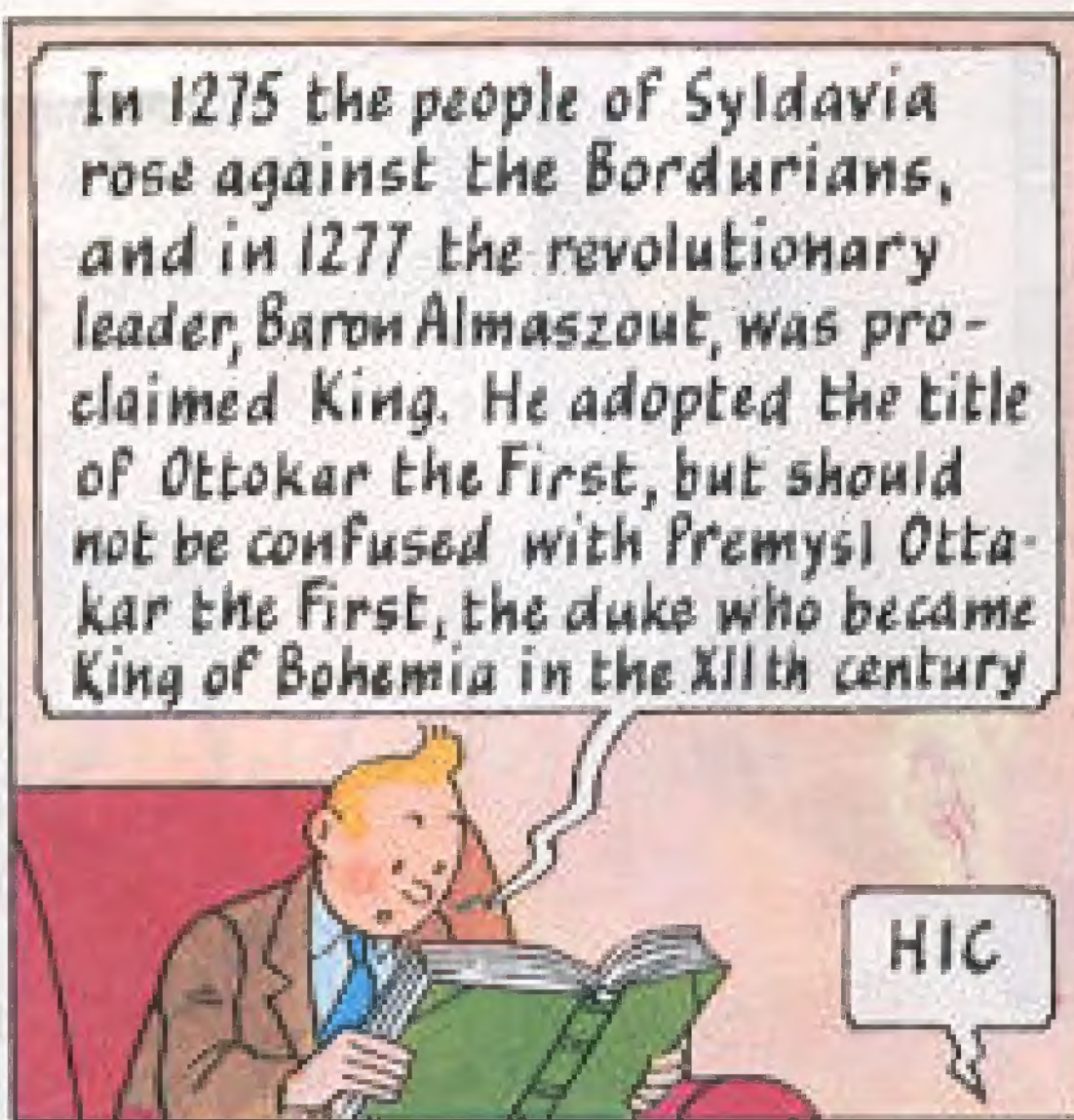
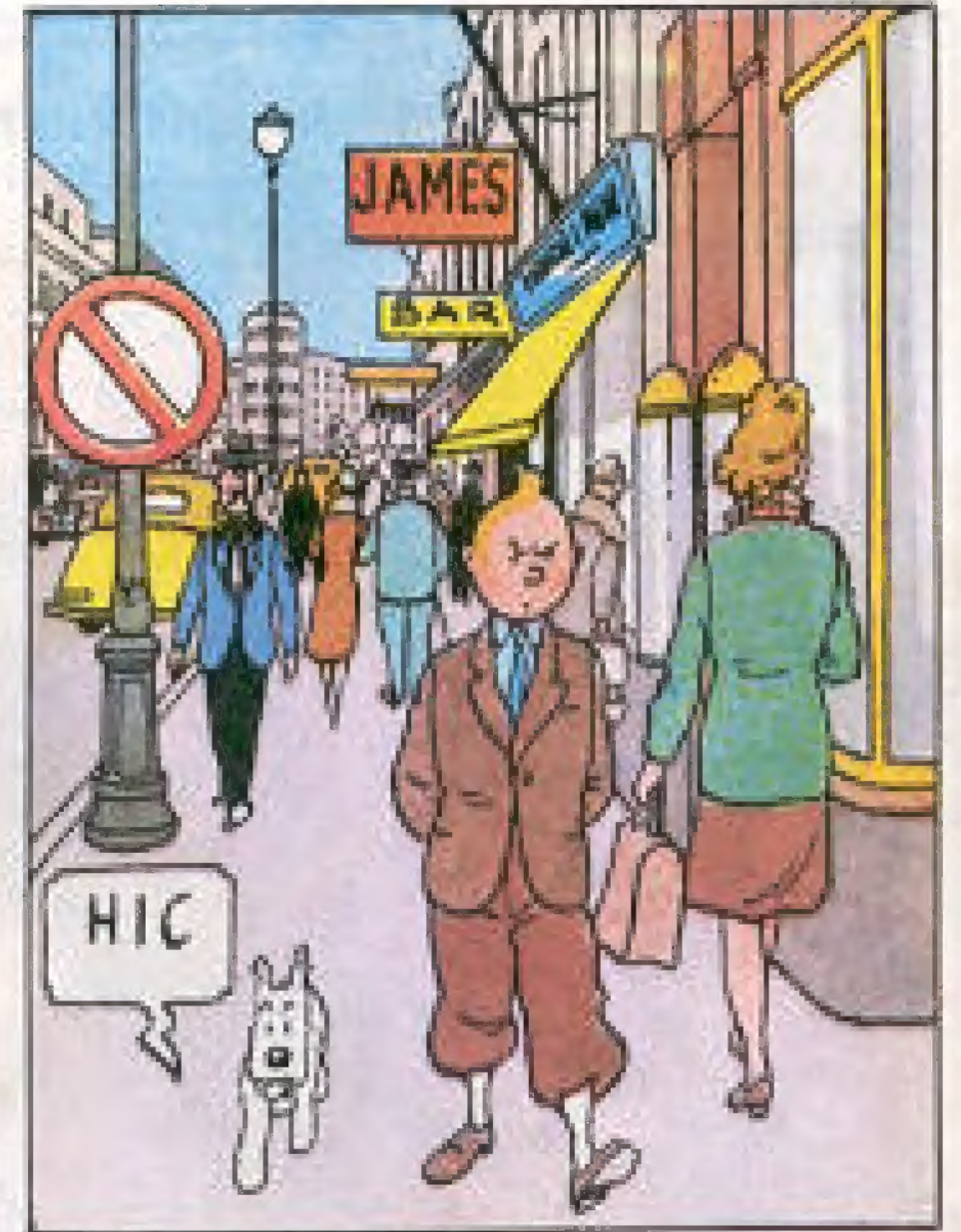
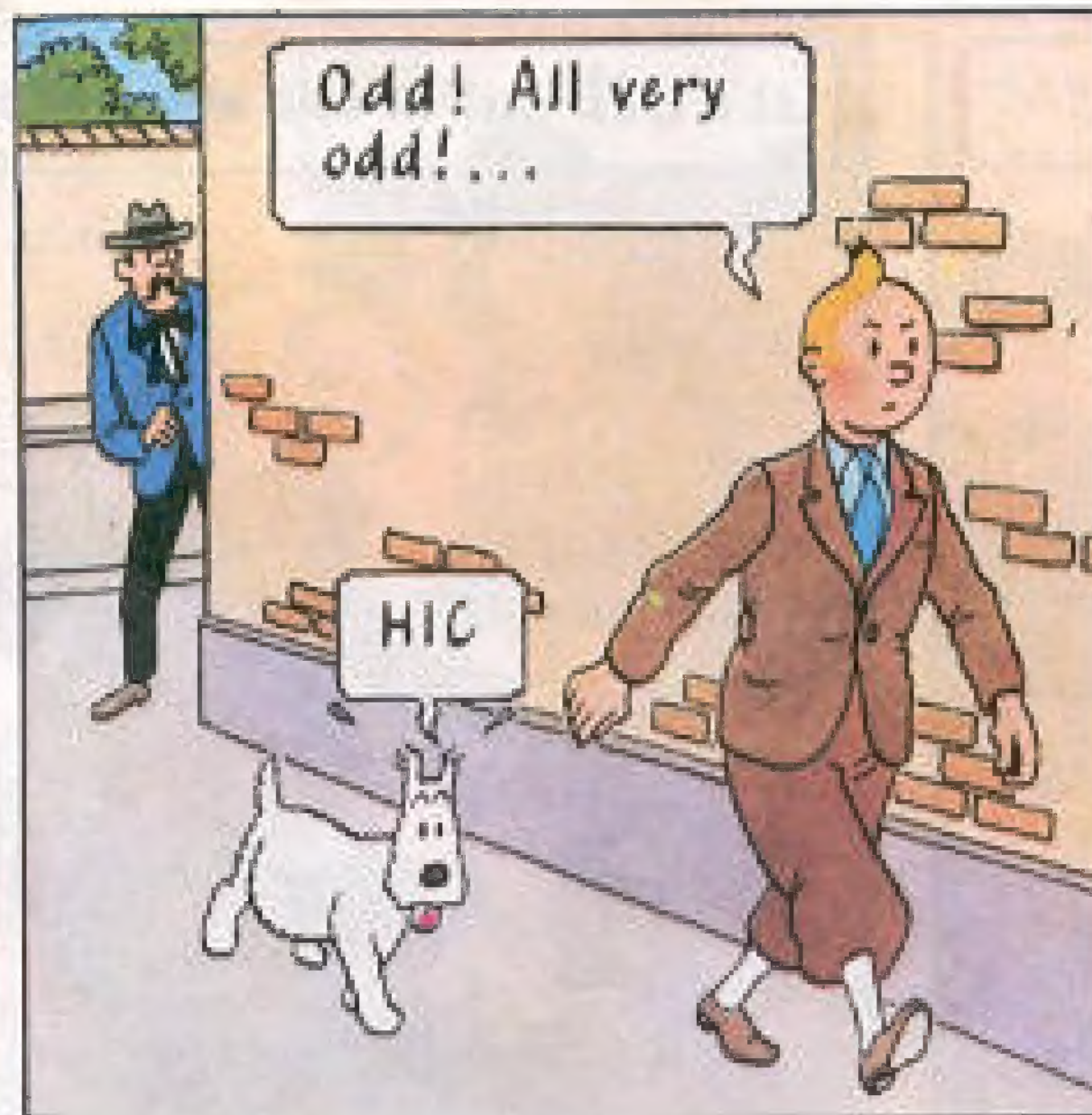




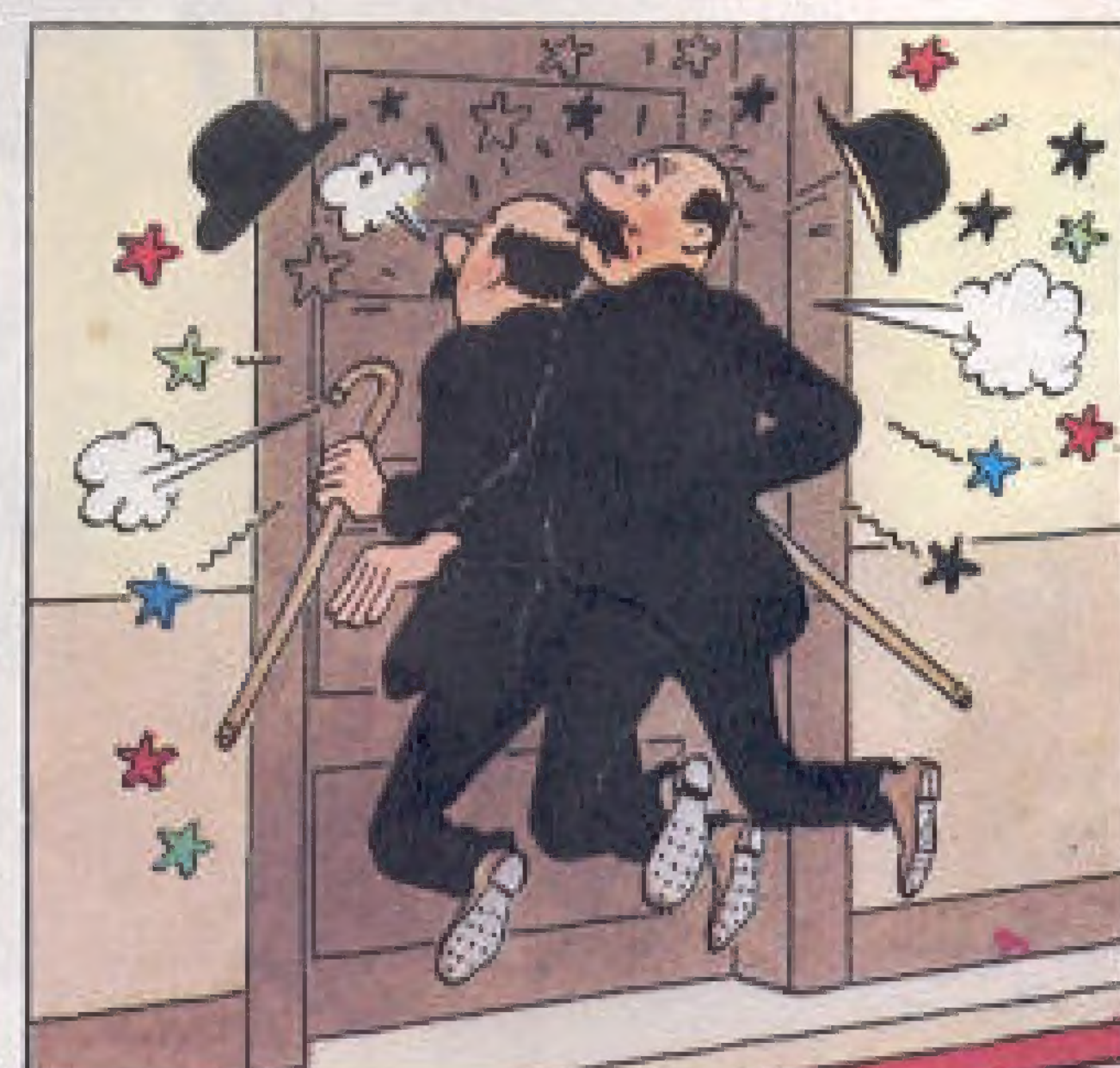
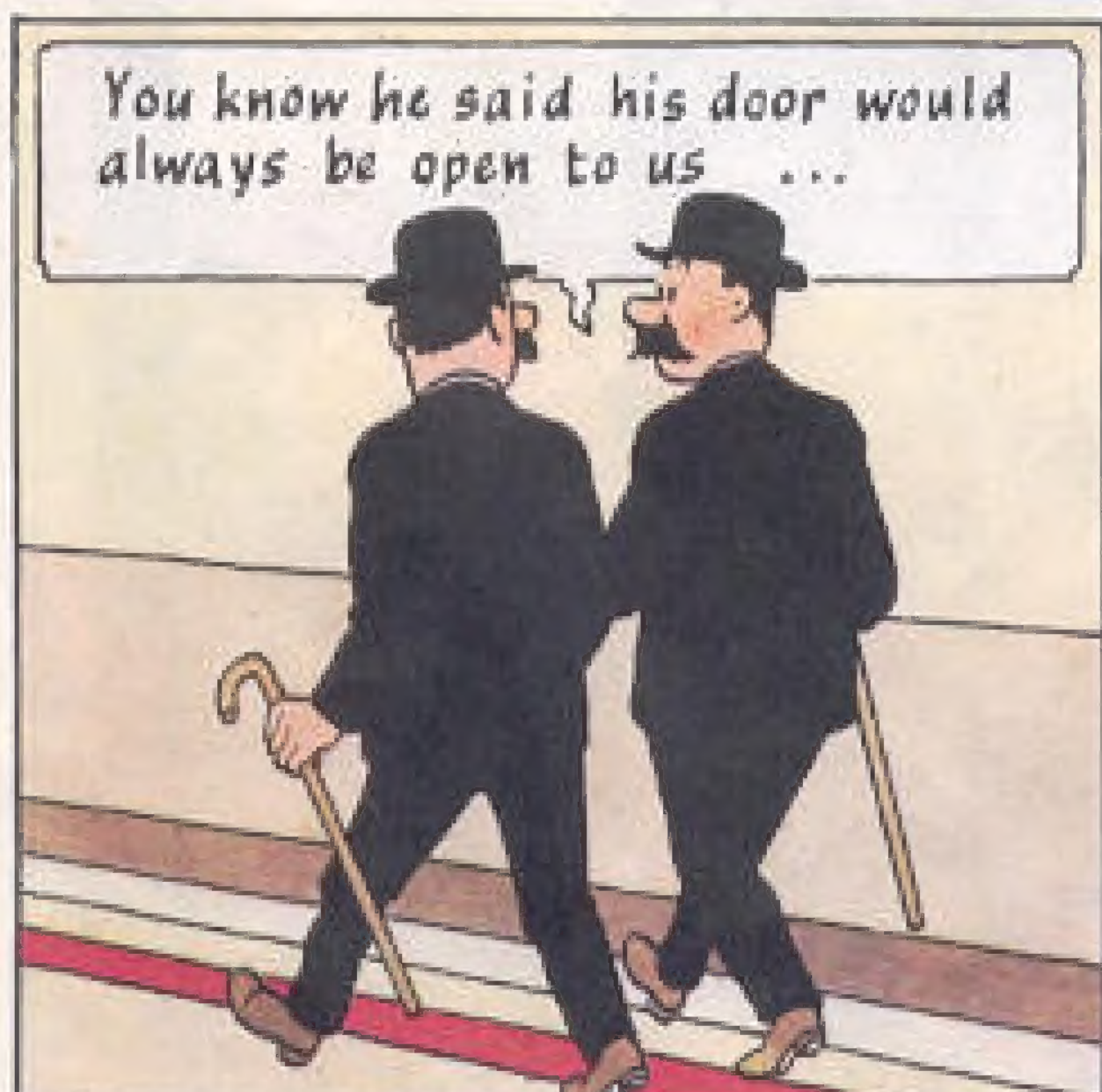
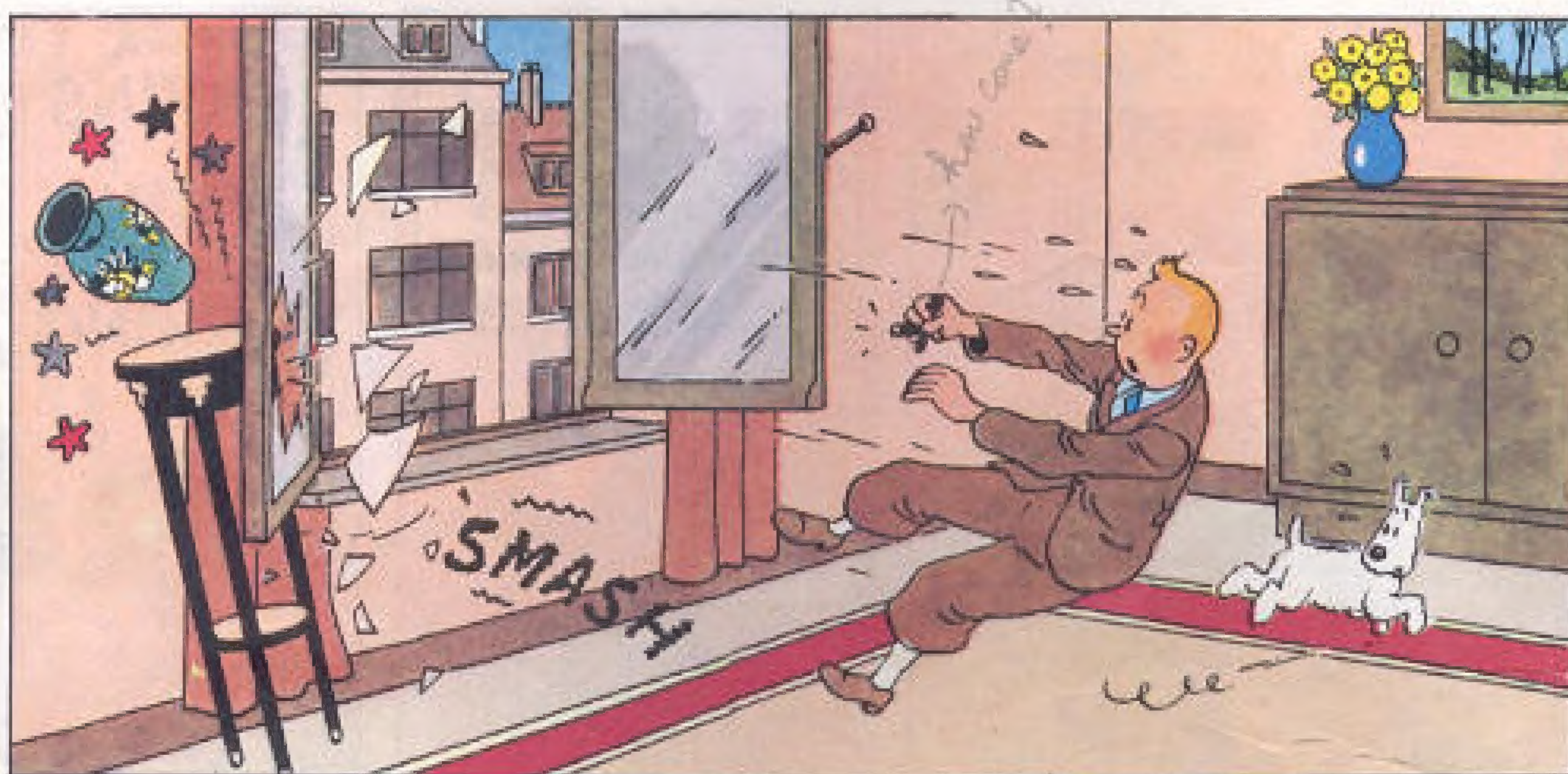
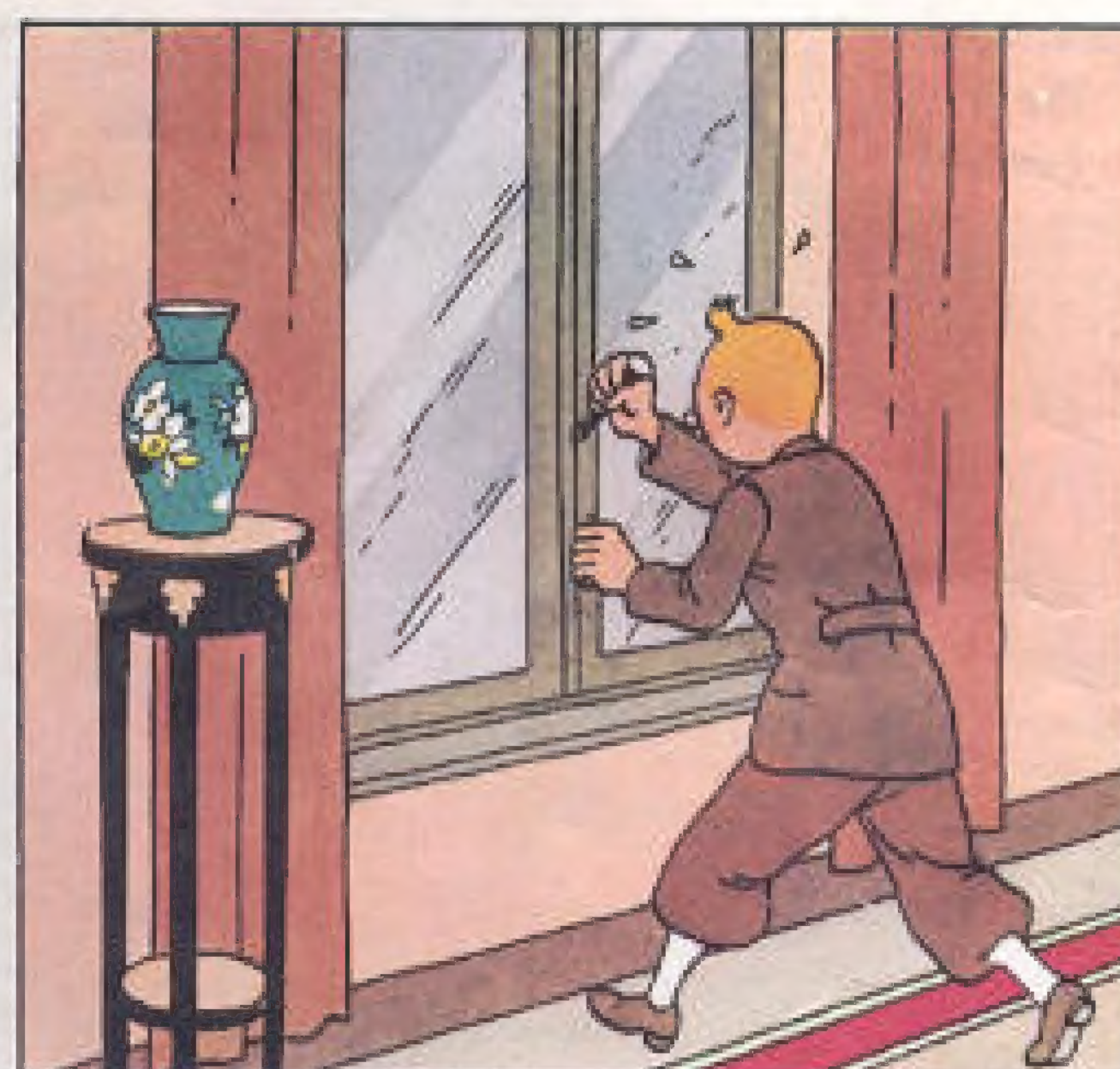
















You have a fine way of welcoming people!... Oho! What's all this?

?



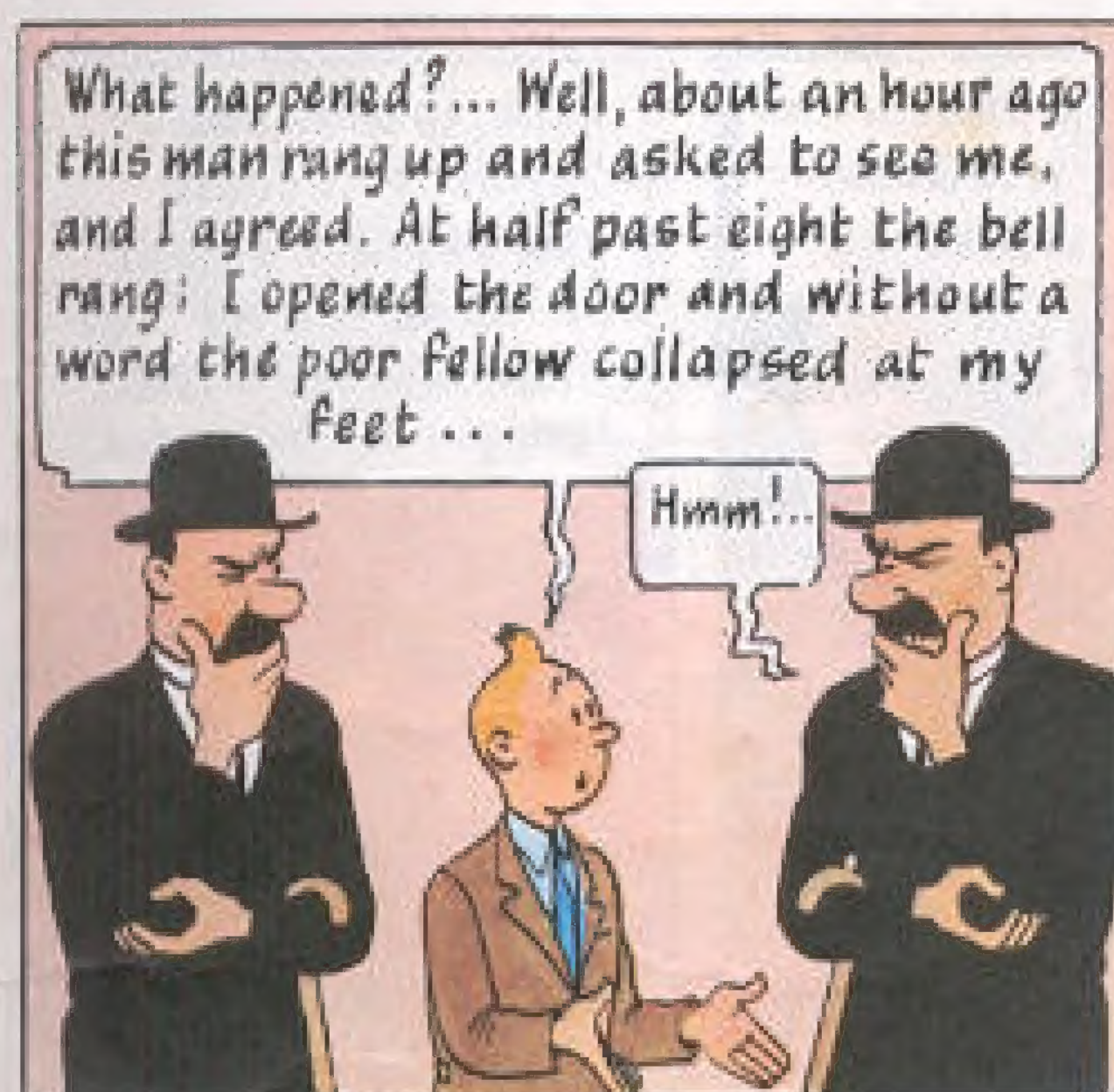
Help me to lift him on to the sofa, would you?...

Is he... dead?



But tell us what happened.

No, he's alive; his heart is beating.



What happened?... Well, about an hour ago this man rang up and asked to see me, and I agreed. At half past eight the bell rang; I opened the door and without a word the poor fellow collapsed at my feet...

Hmm!...



You said, 'without a word'... In that case, how do you know that this was the man who telephoned?...

I don't know, but it seemed likely...

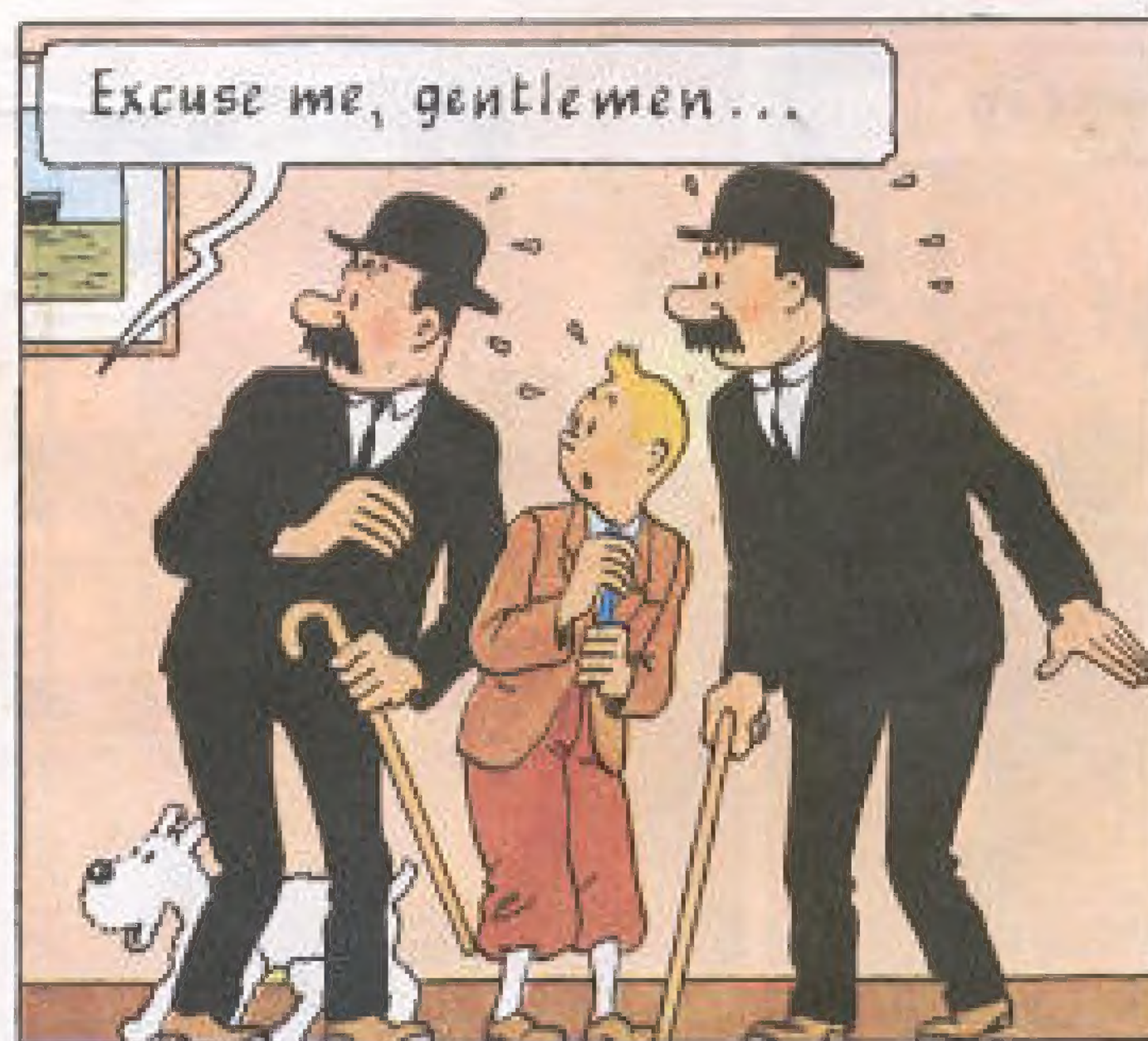


And what about all this evidence of a struggle?



Evidence of a struggle, my foot! The only struggle I had was with the window, which wouldn't open! You aren't trying to say that I knocked this man out?

I didn't say that, but...



Excuse me, gentlemen...



May I ask what I am doing here?...



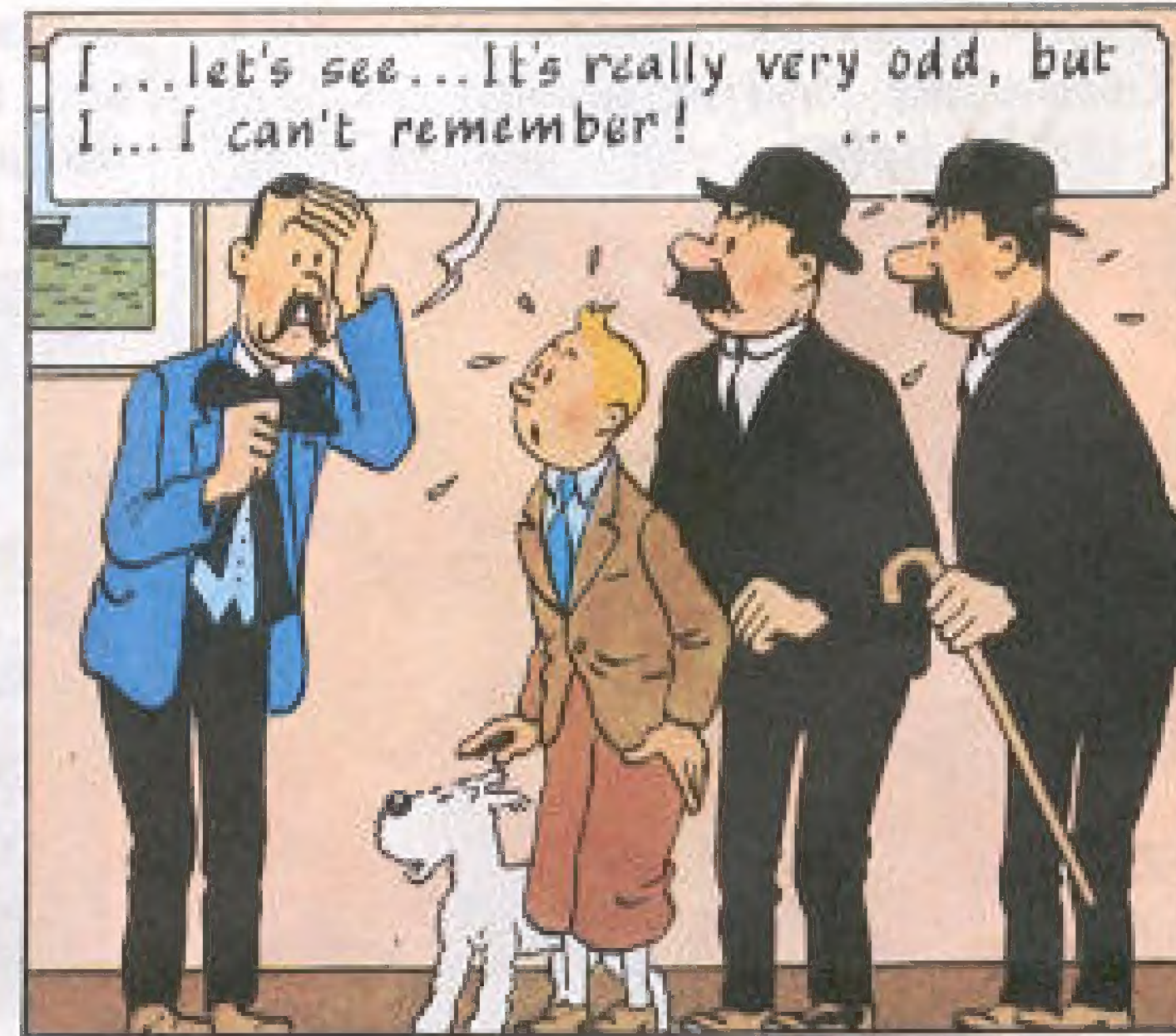
I rather think I should be asking you that question...

To begin with, can you describe your assailant?



My assailant?... What assailant?

Now don't try any funny business with us, my friend... Come on, what's your name?

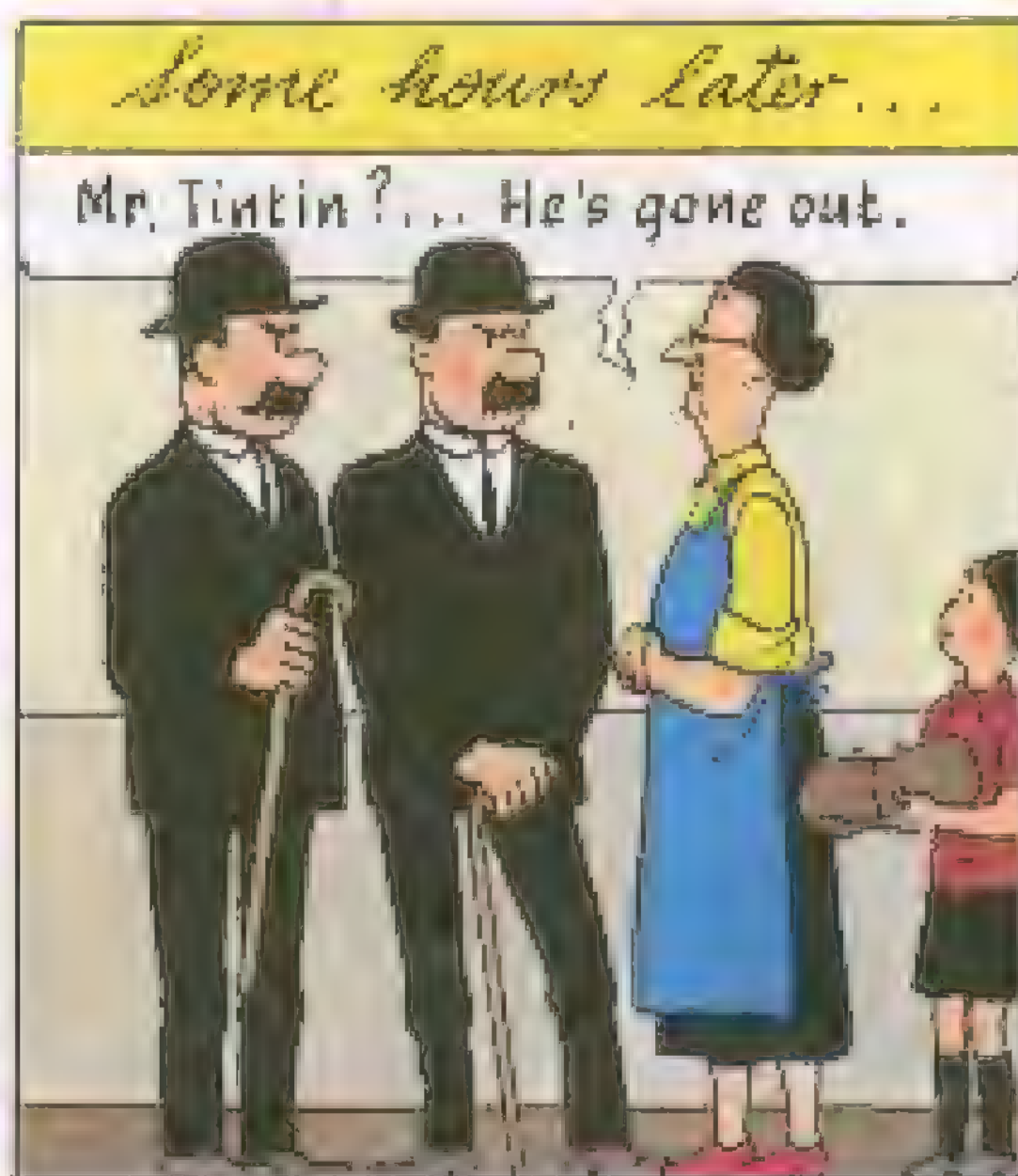
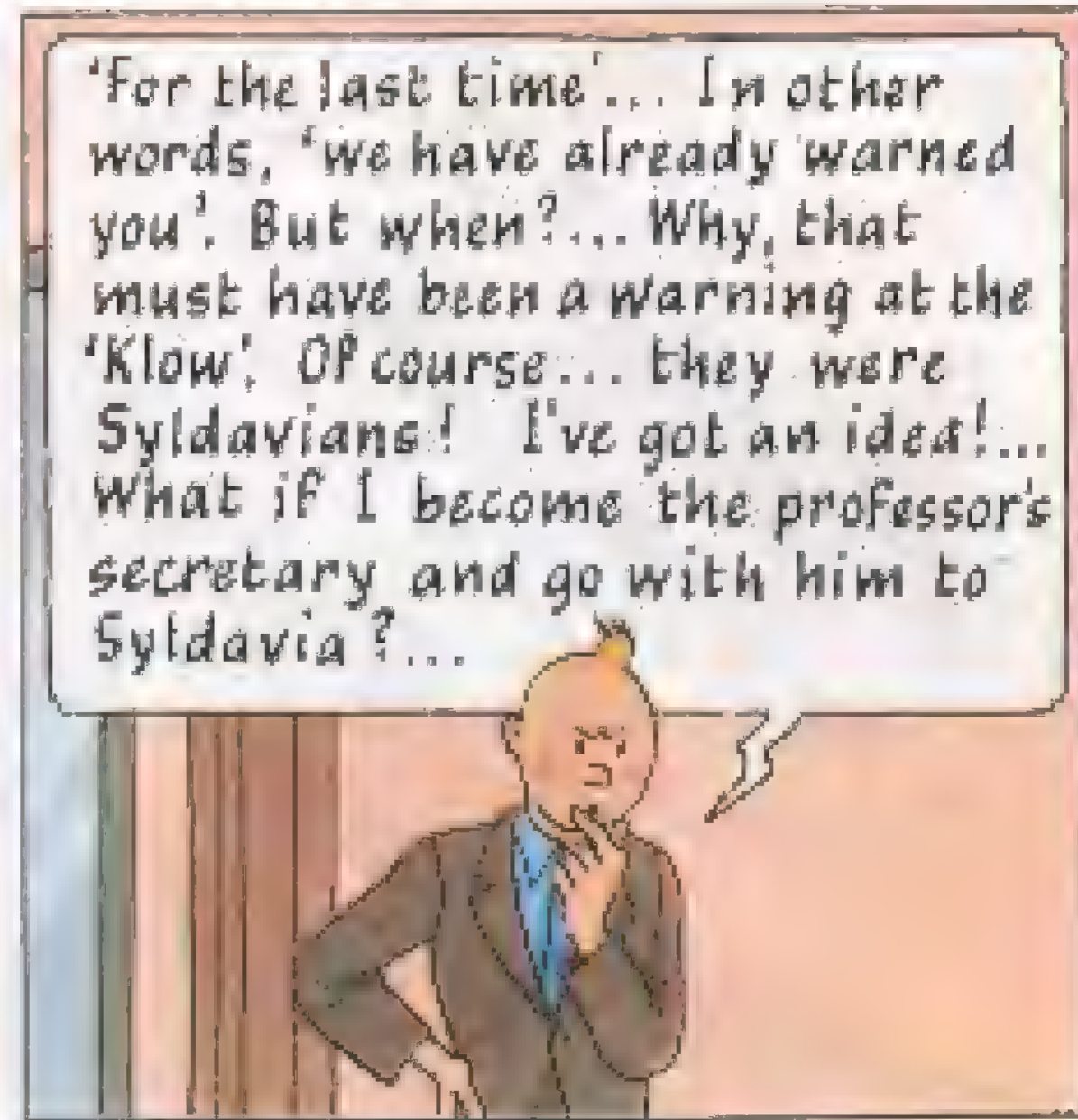
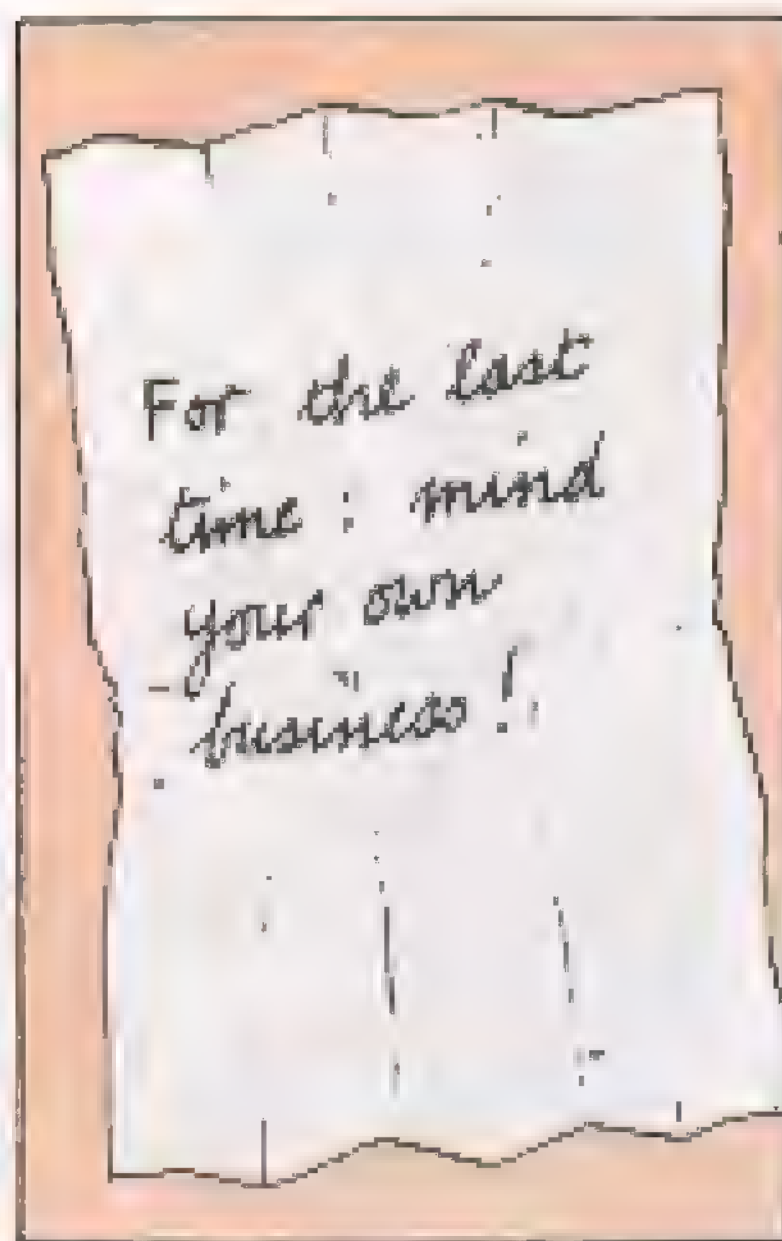


[...]let's see... It's really very odd, but I... I can't remember!...

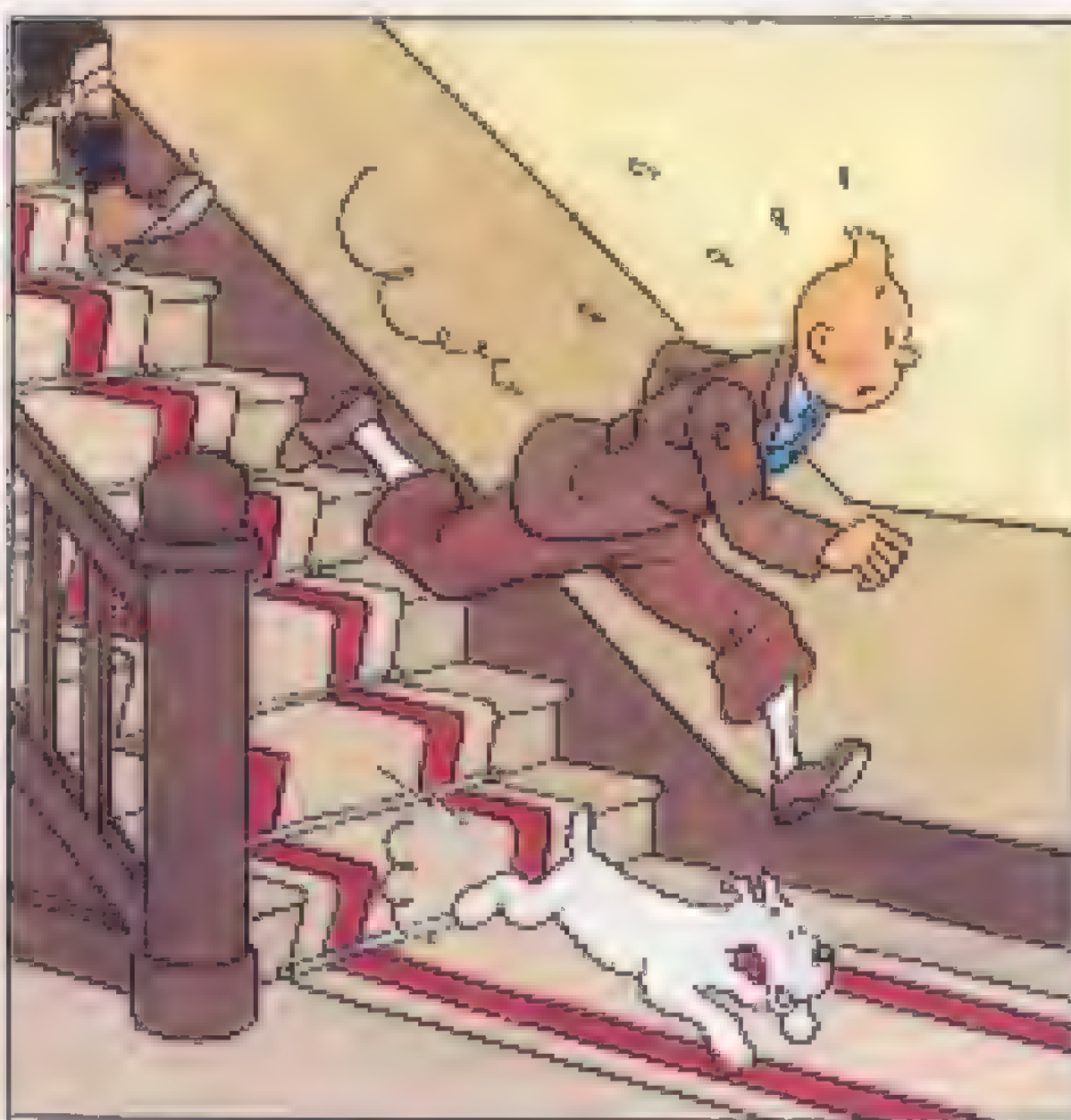
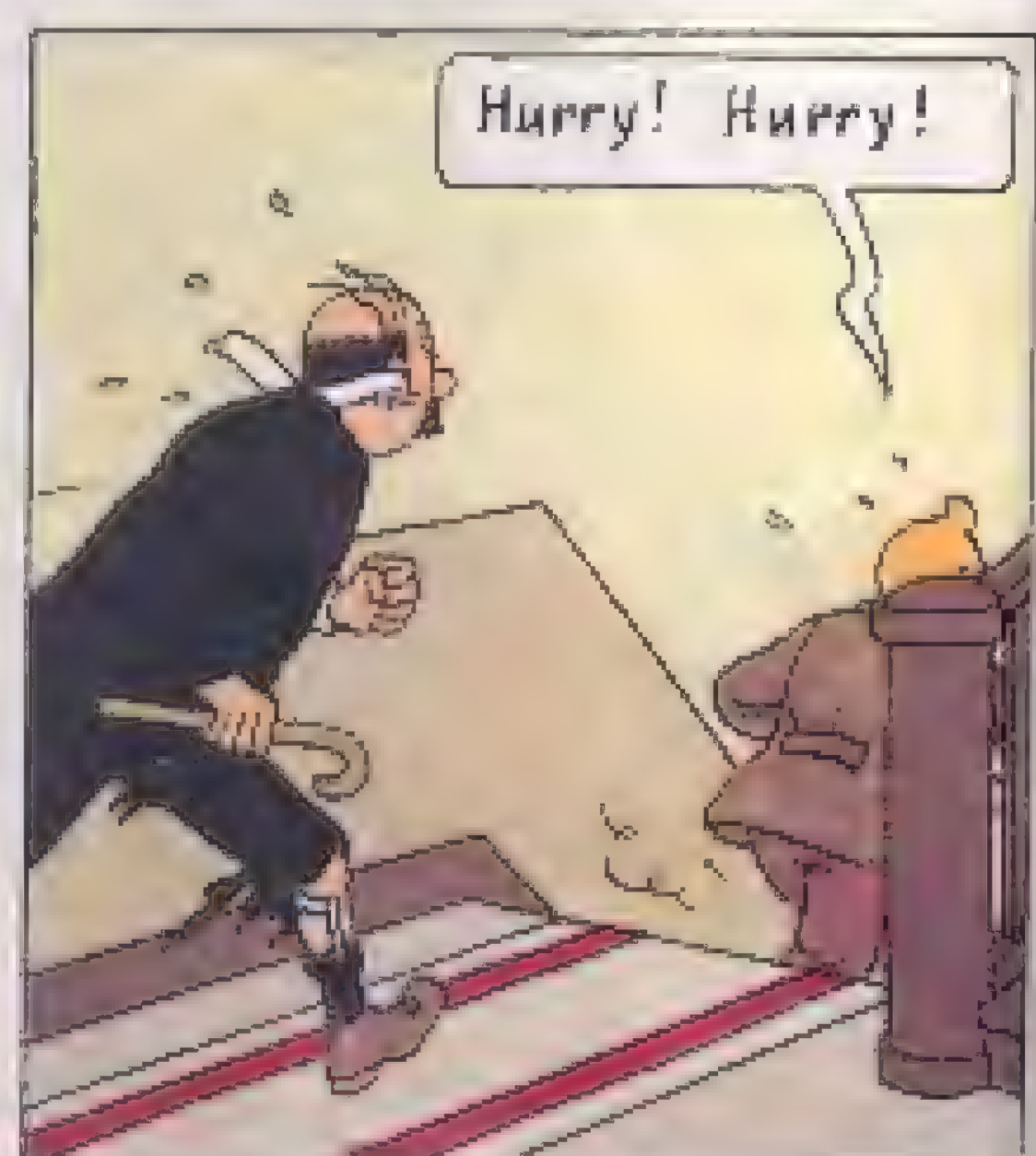
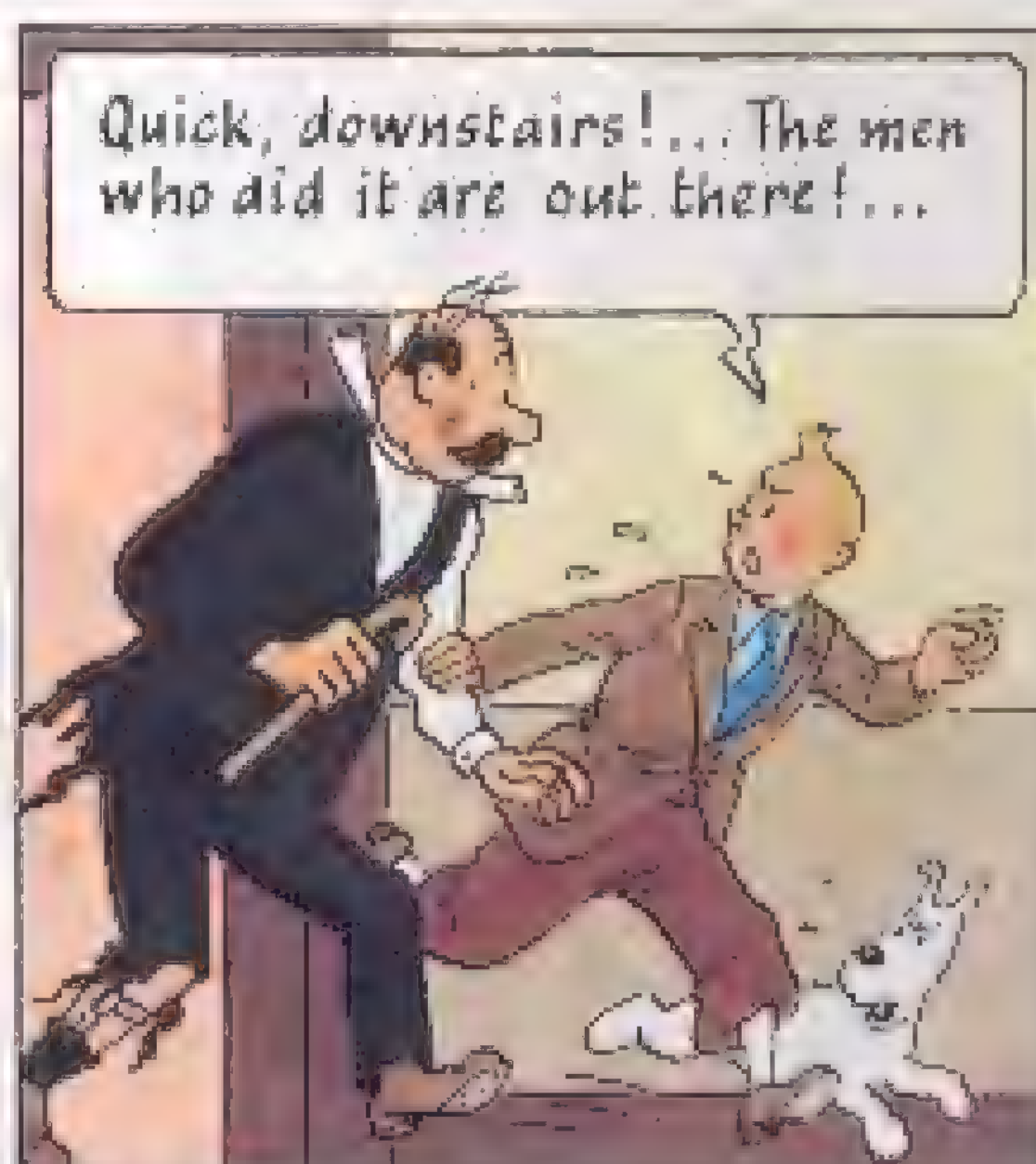
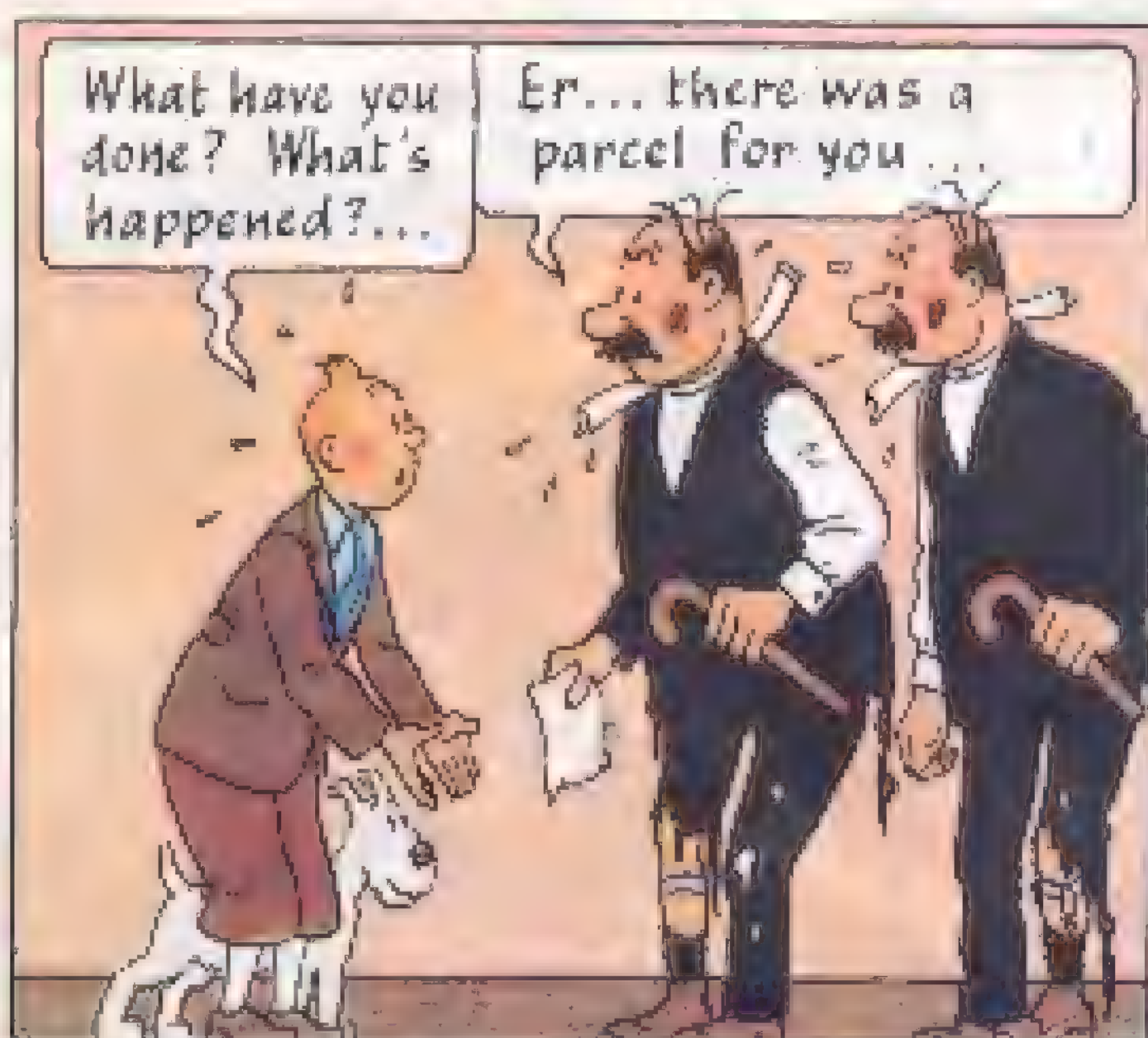
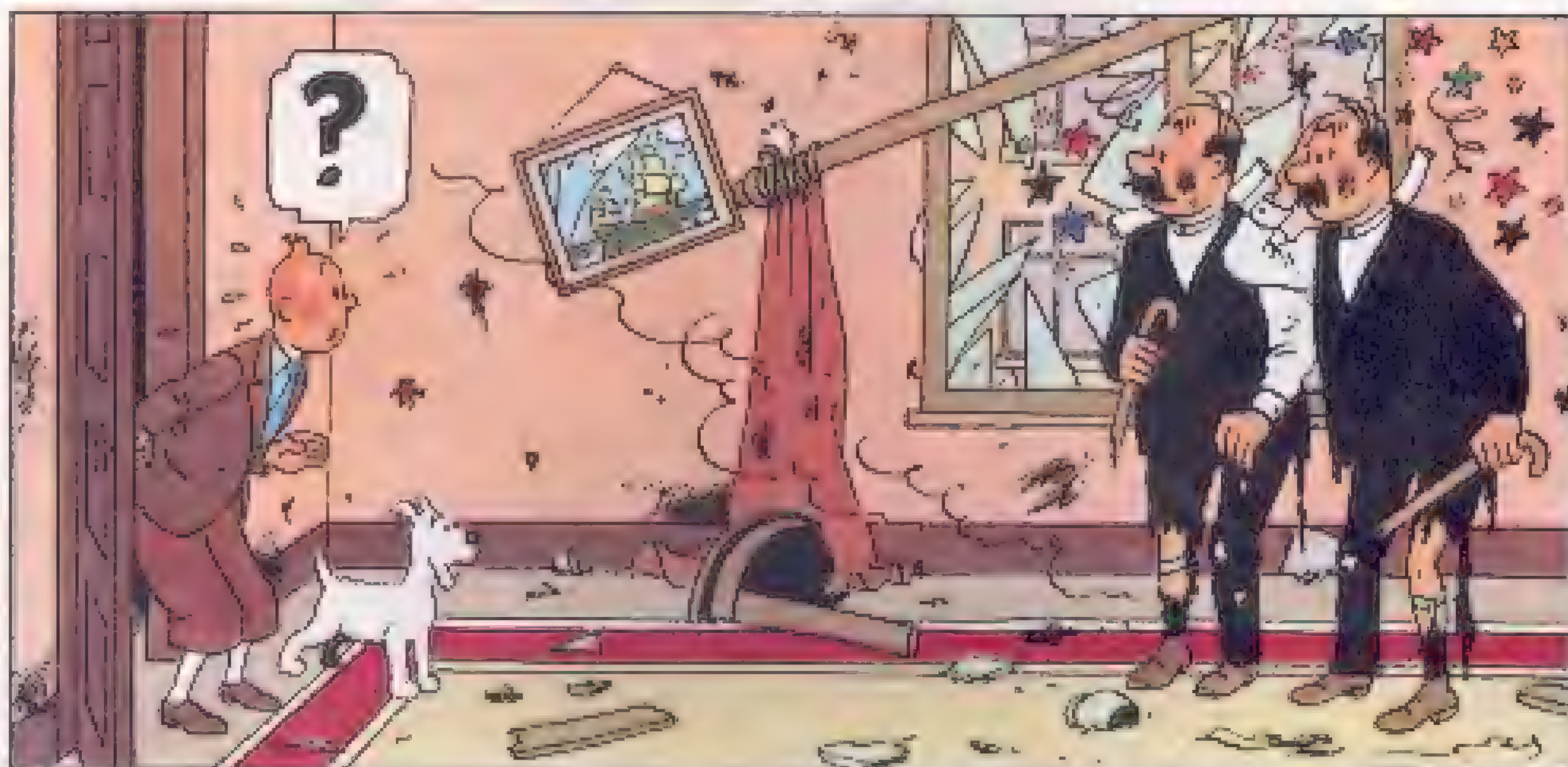




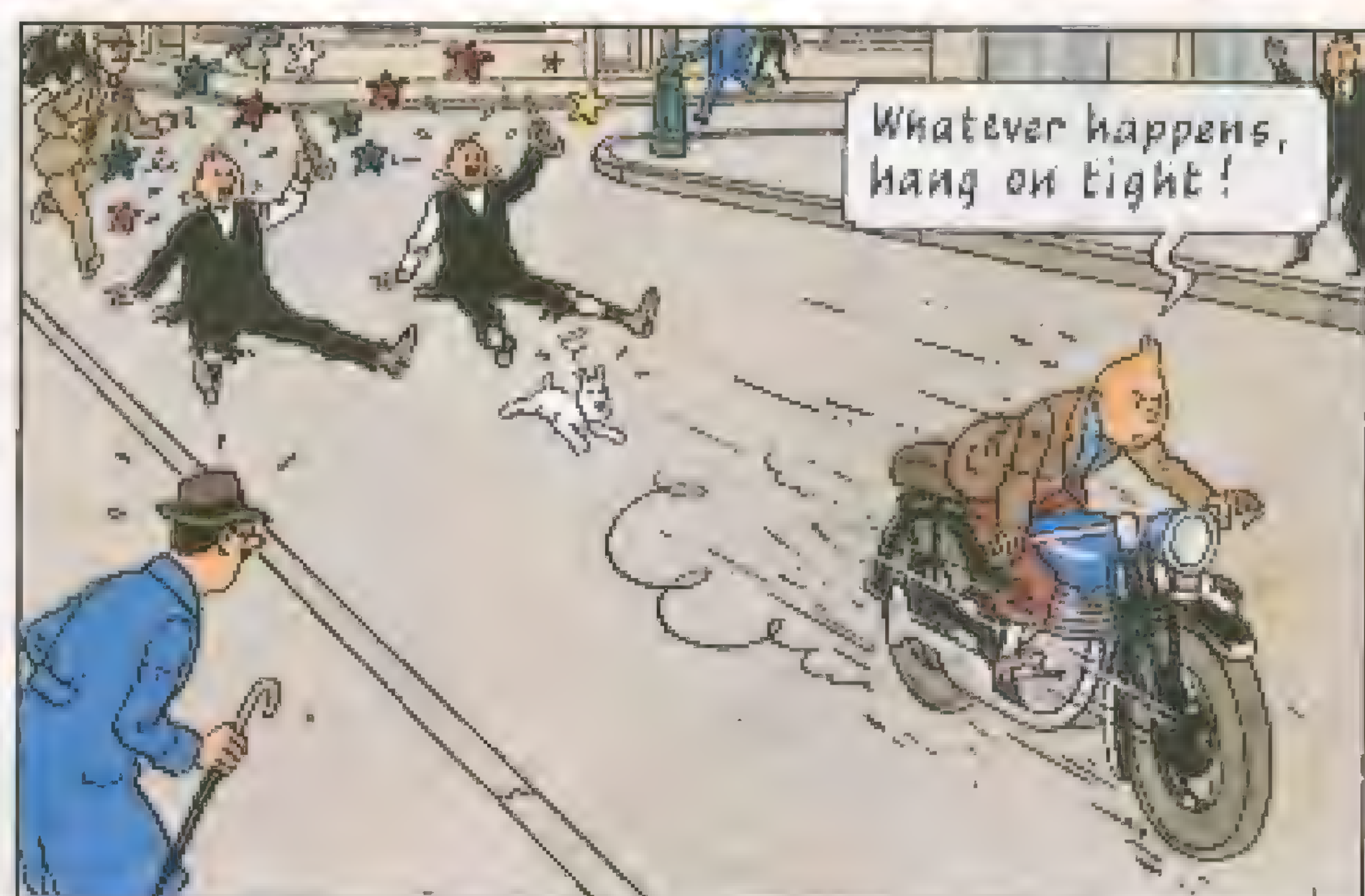
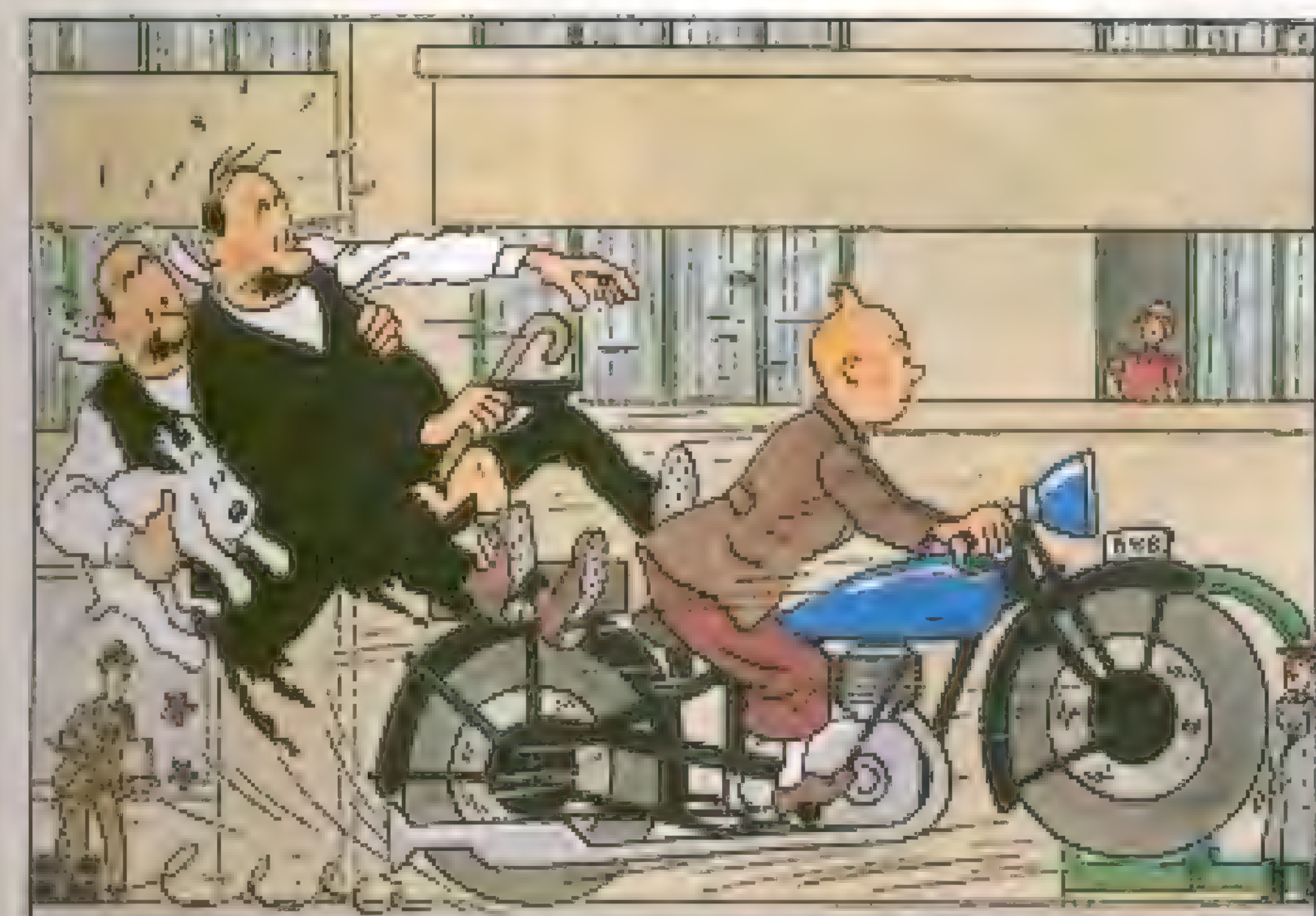
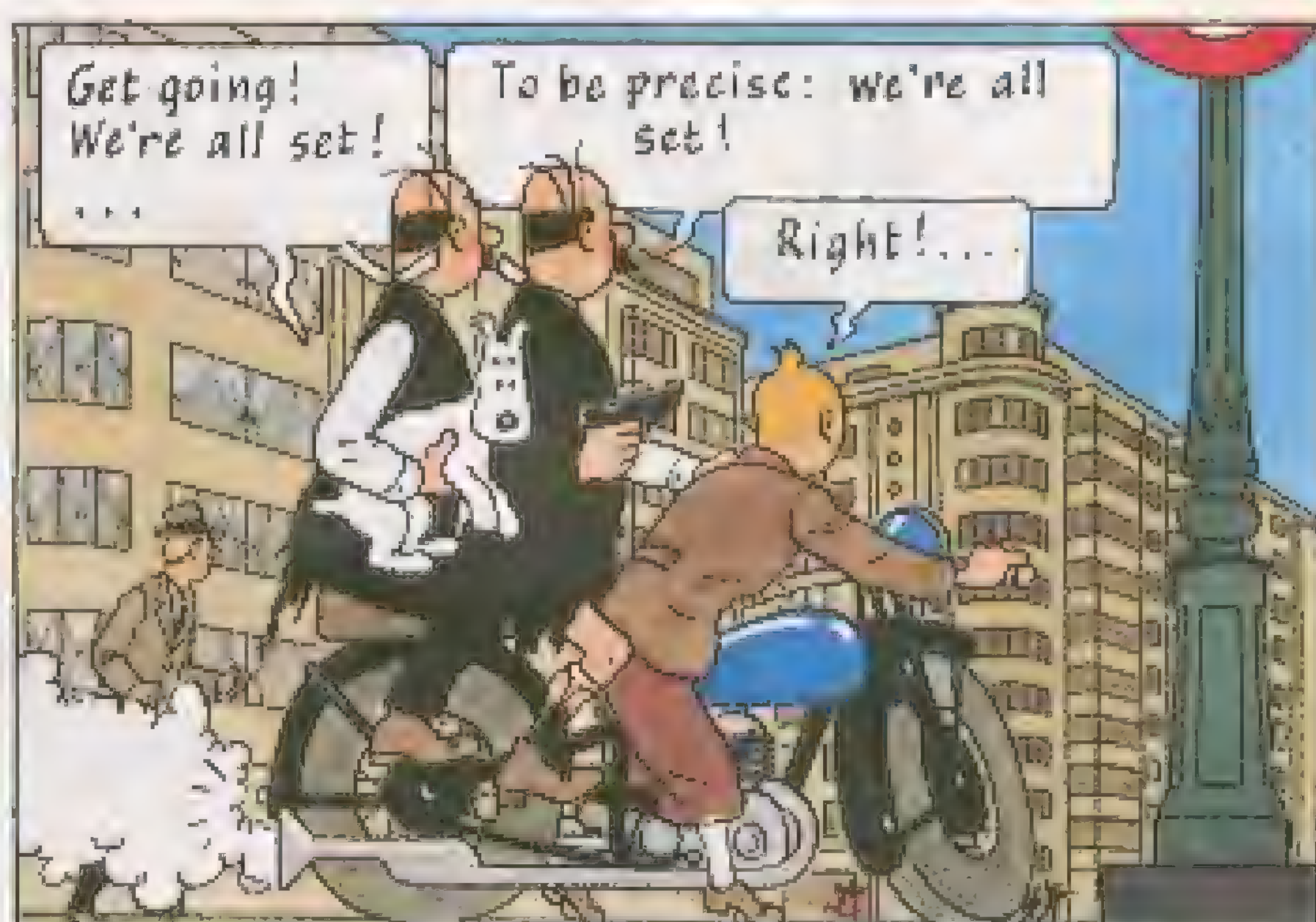
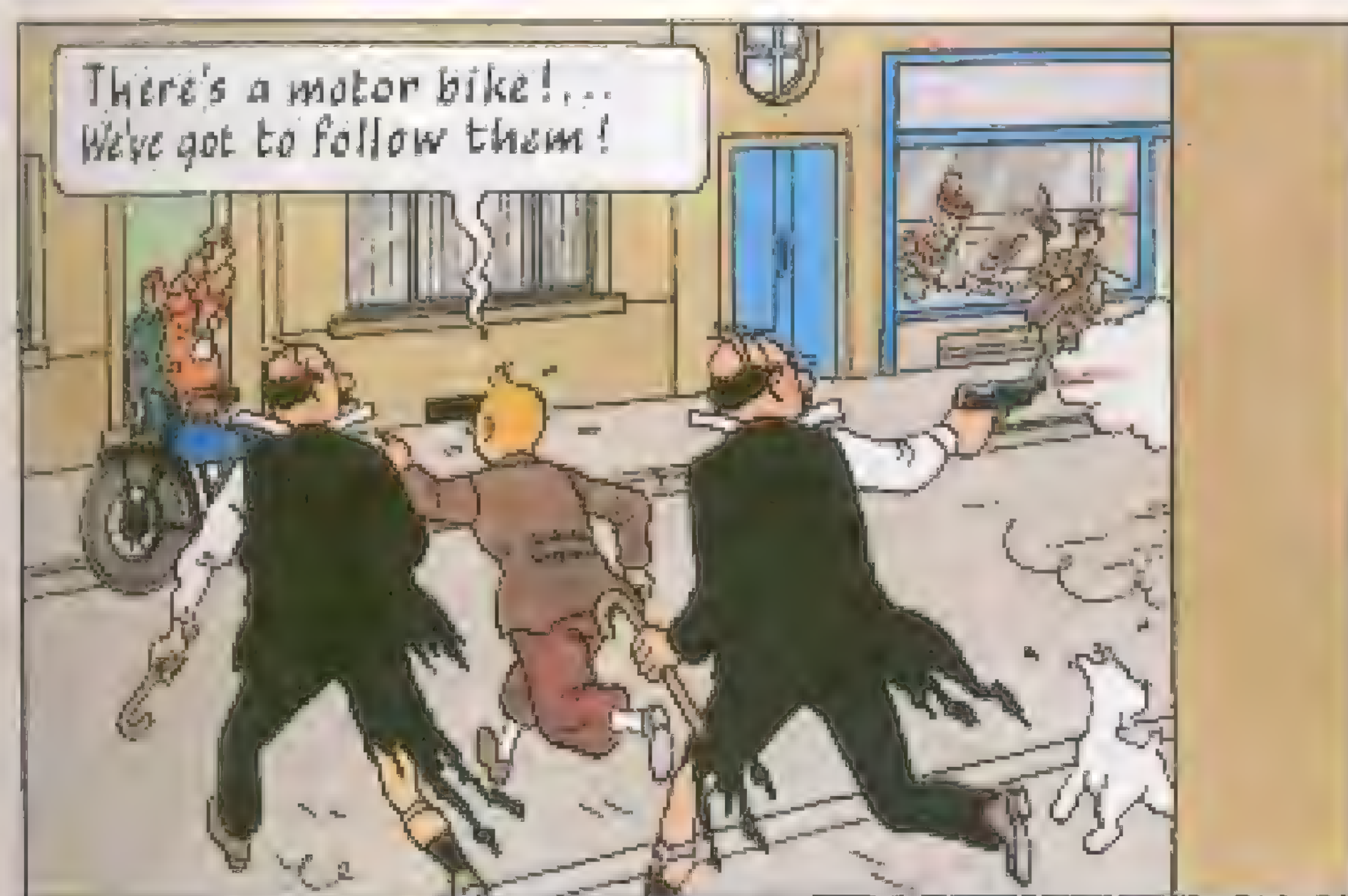




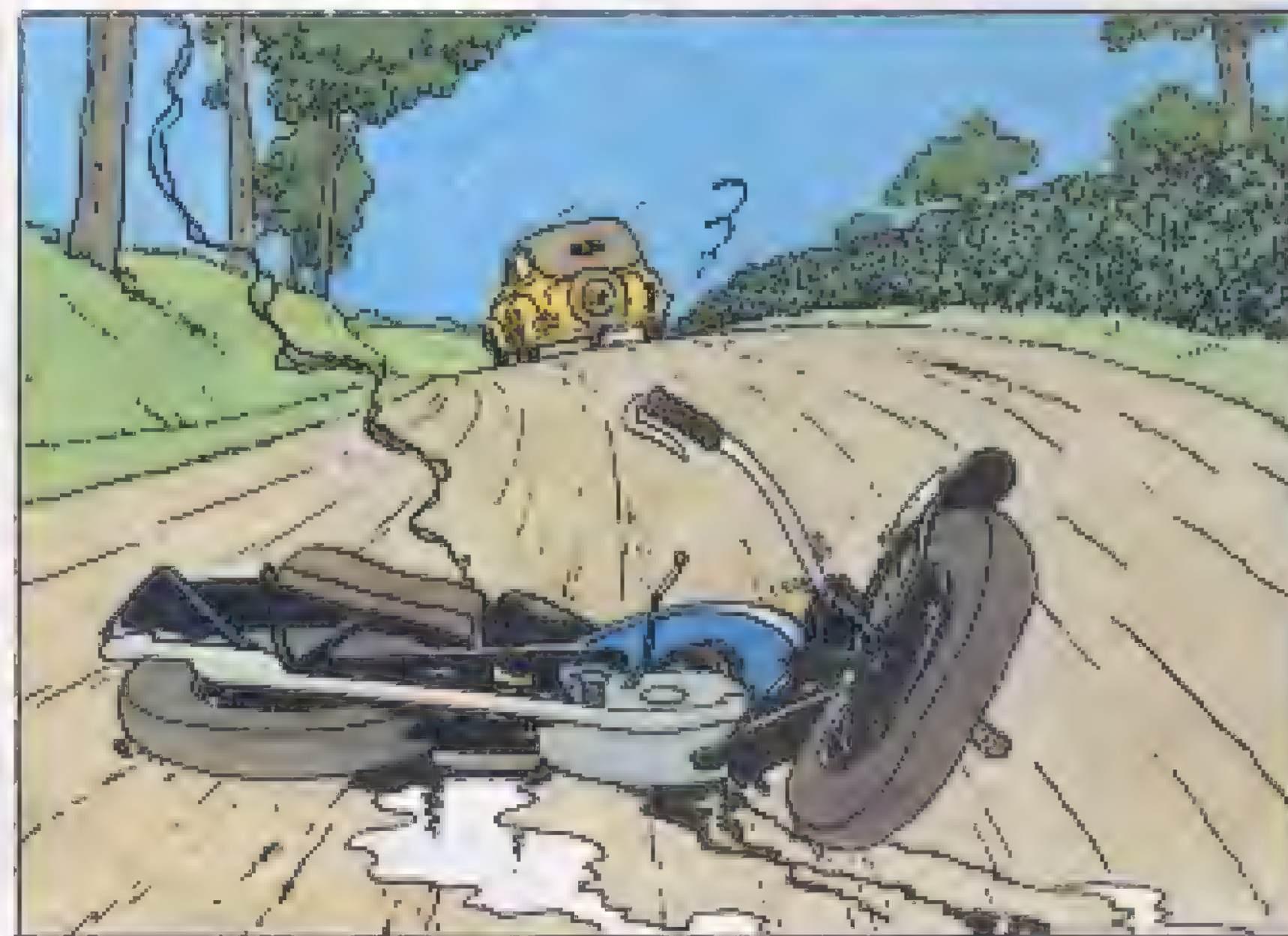
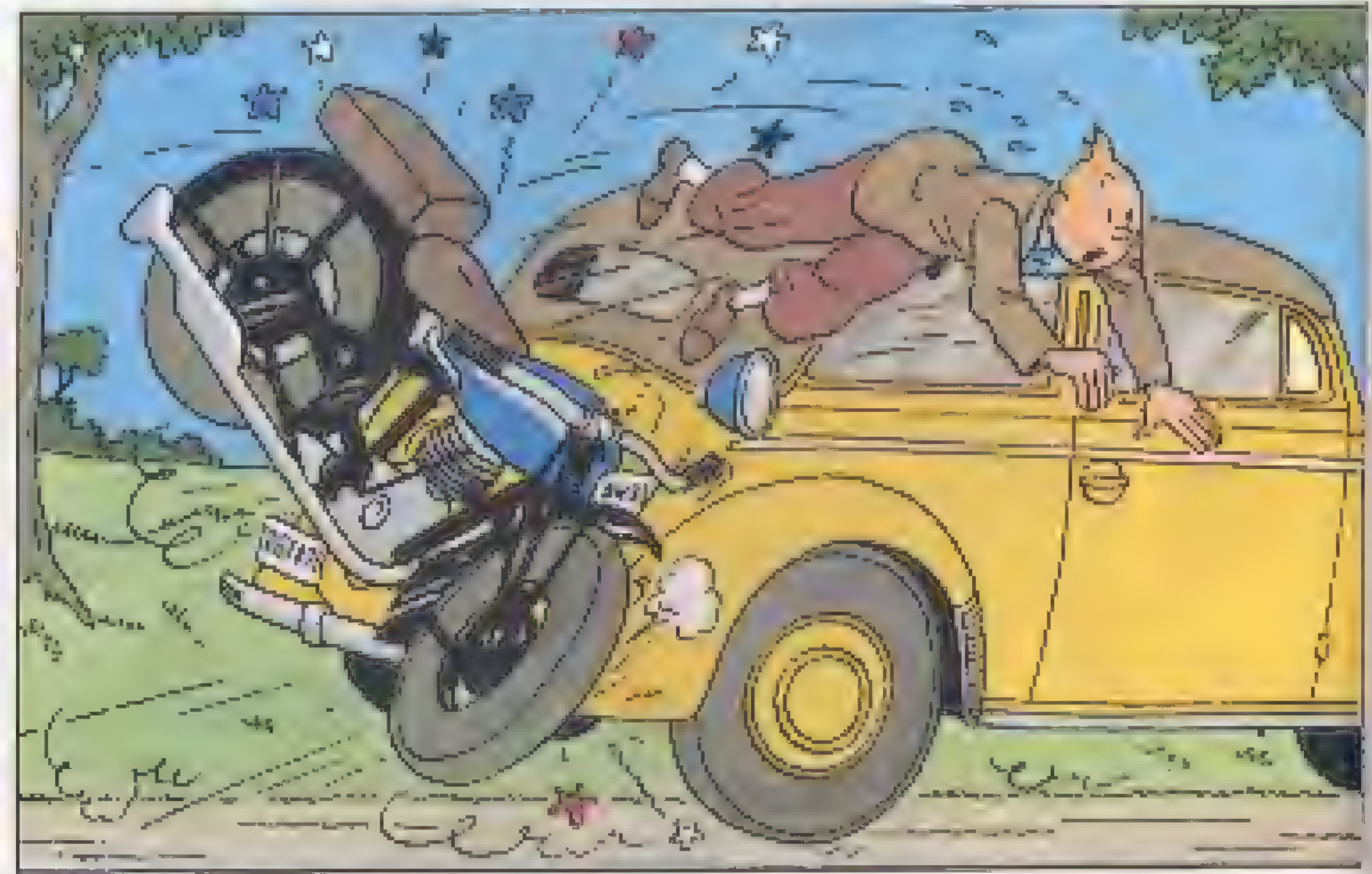
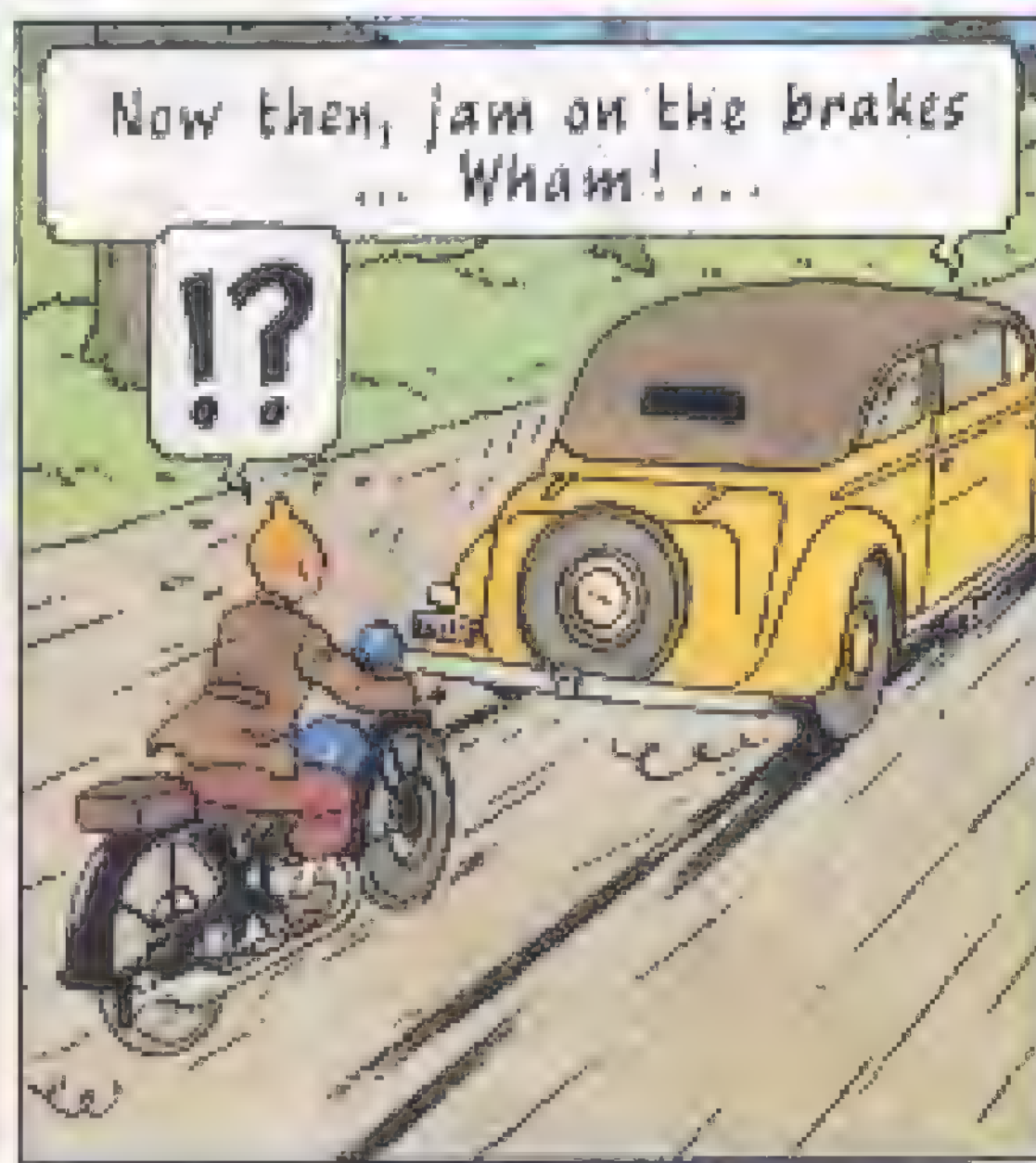
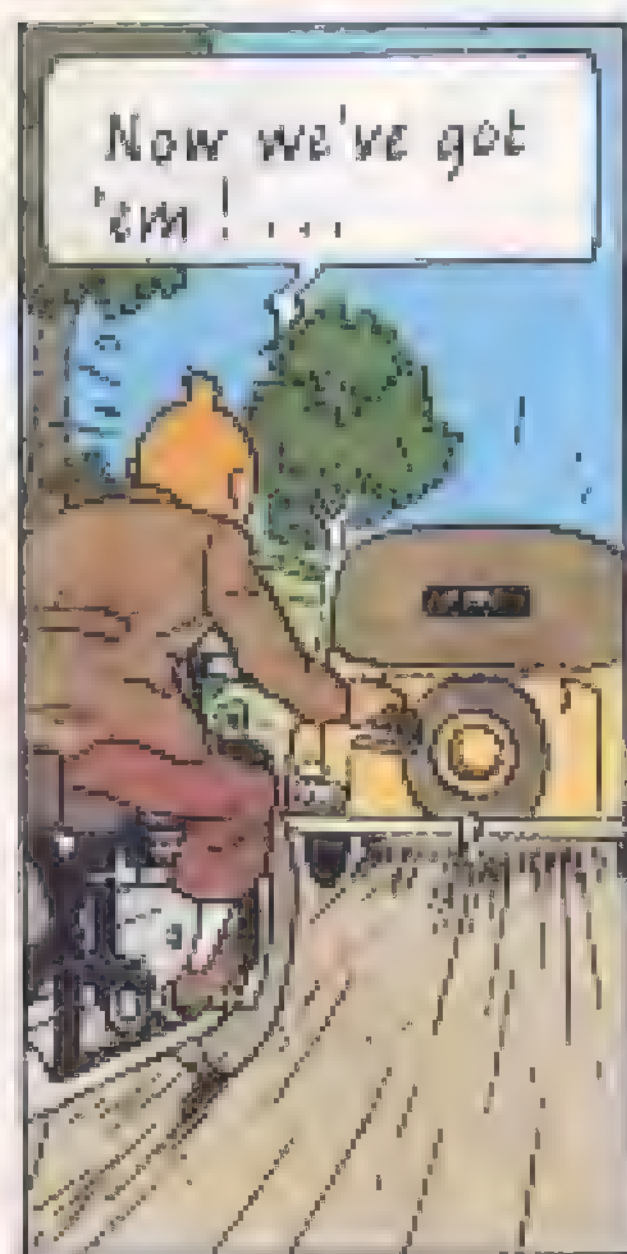
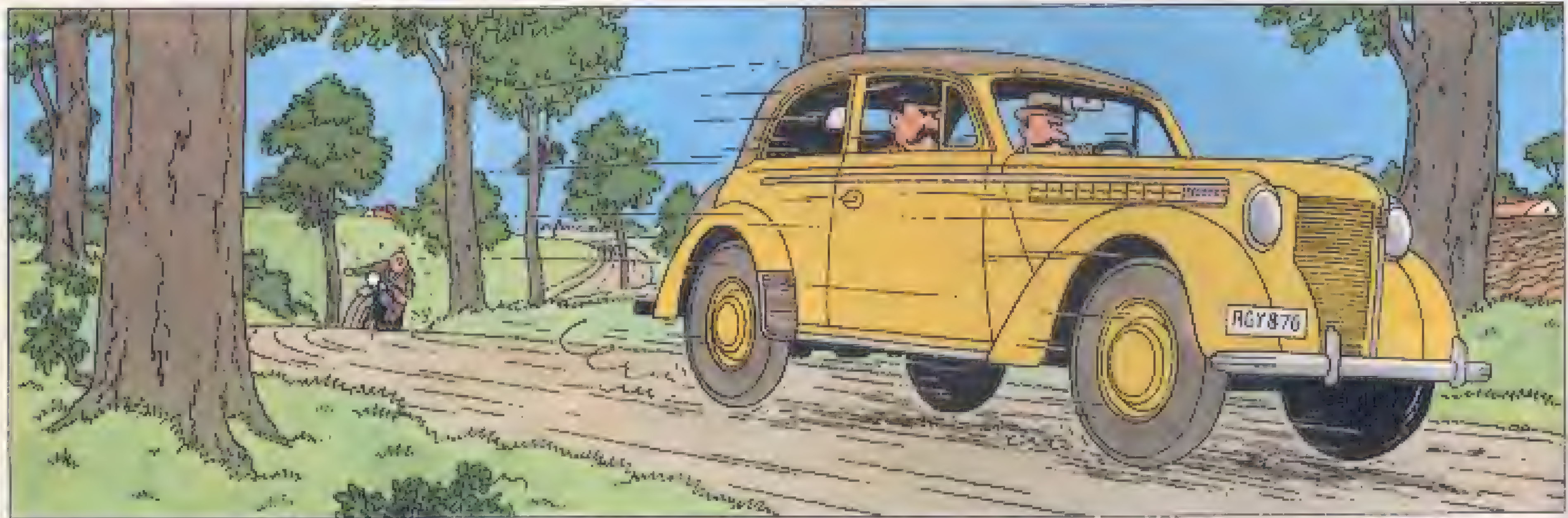
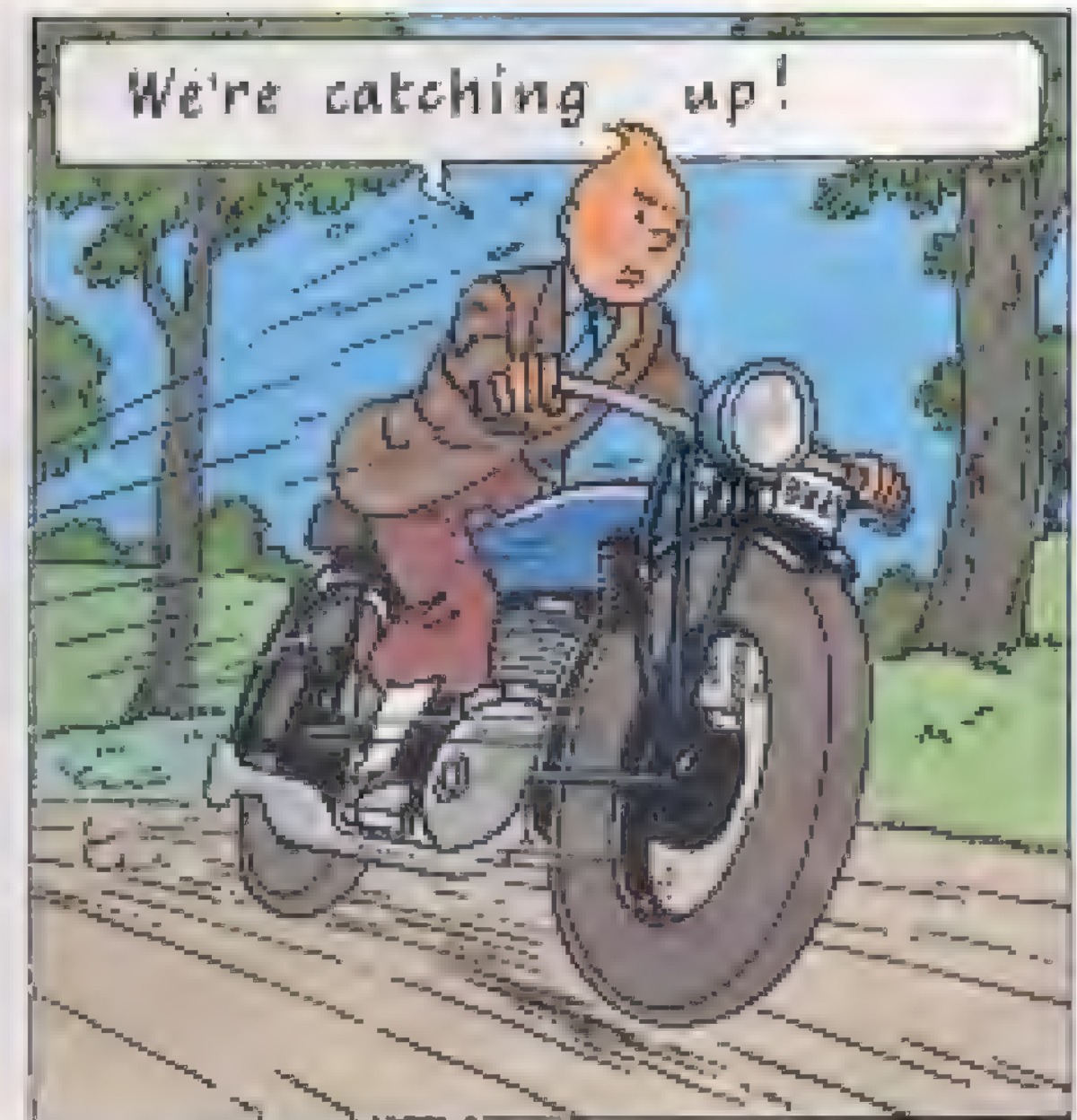
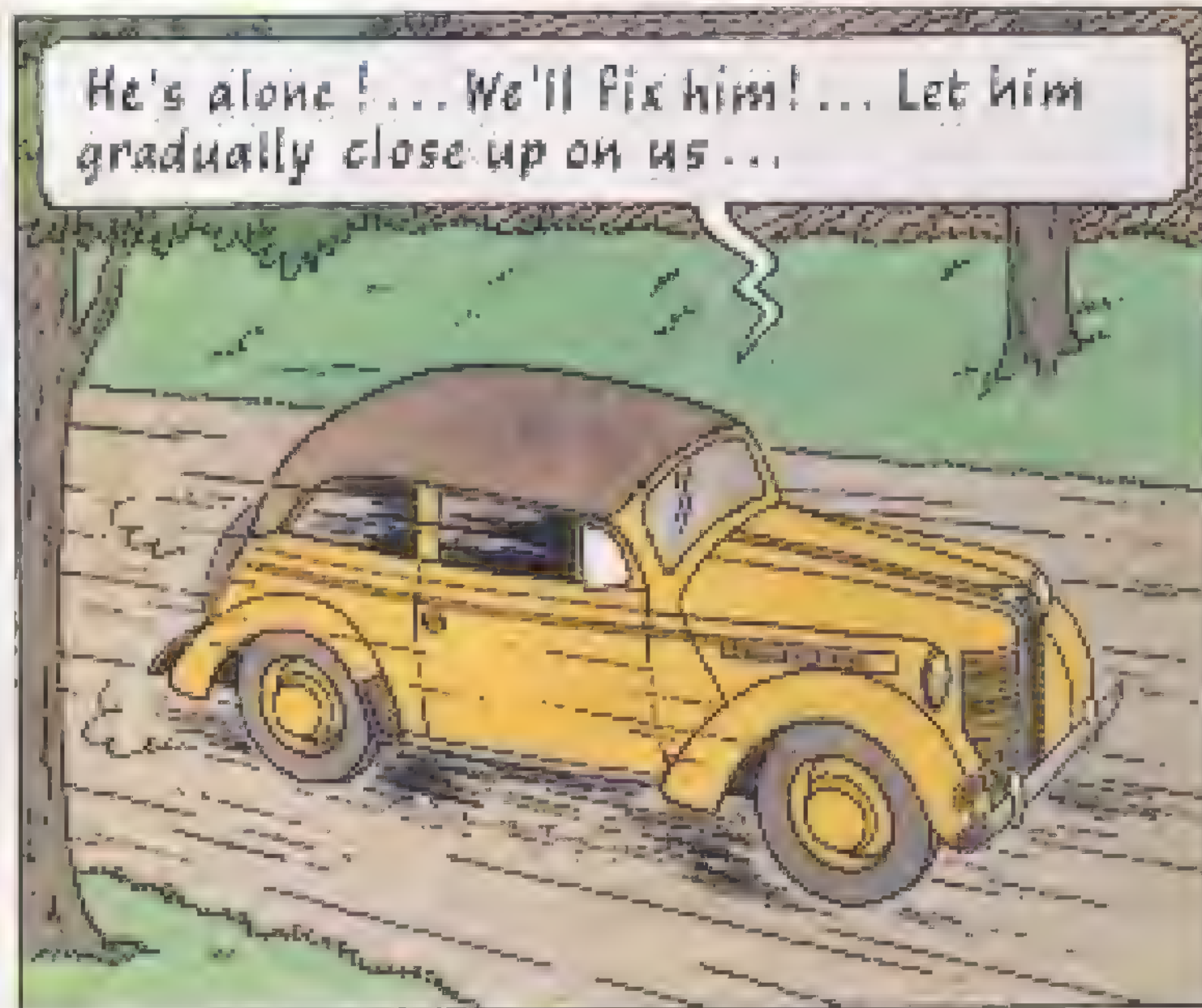




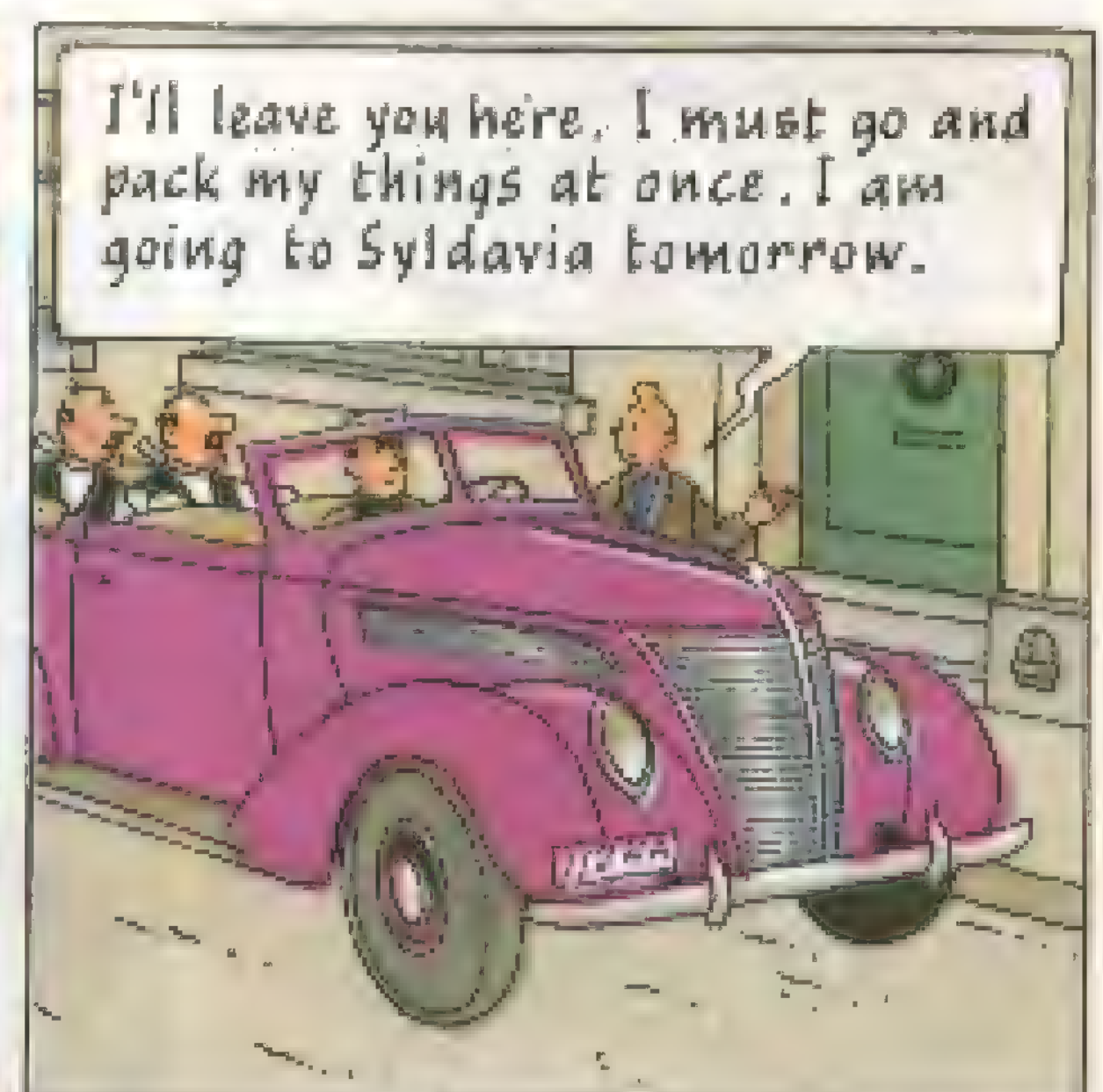
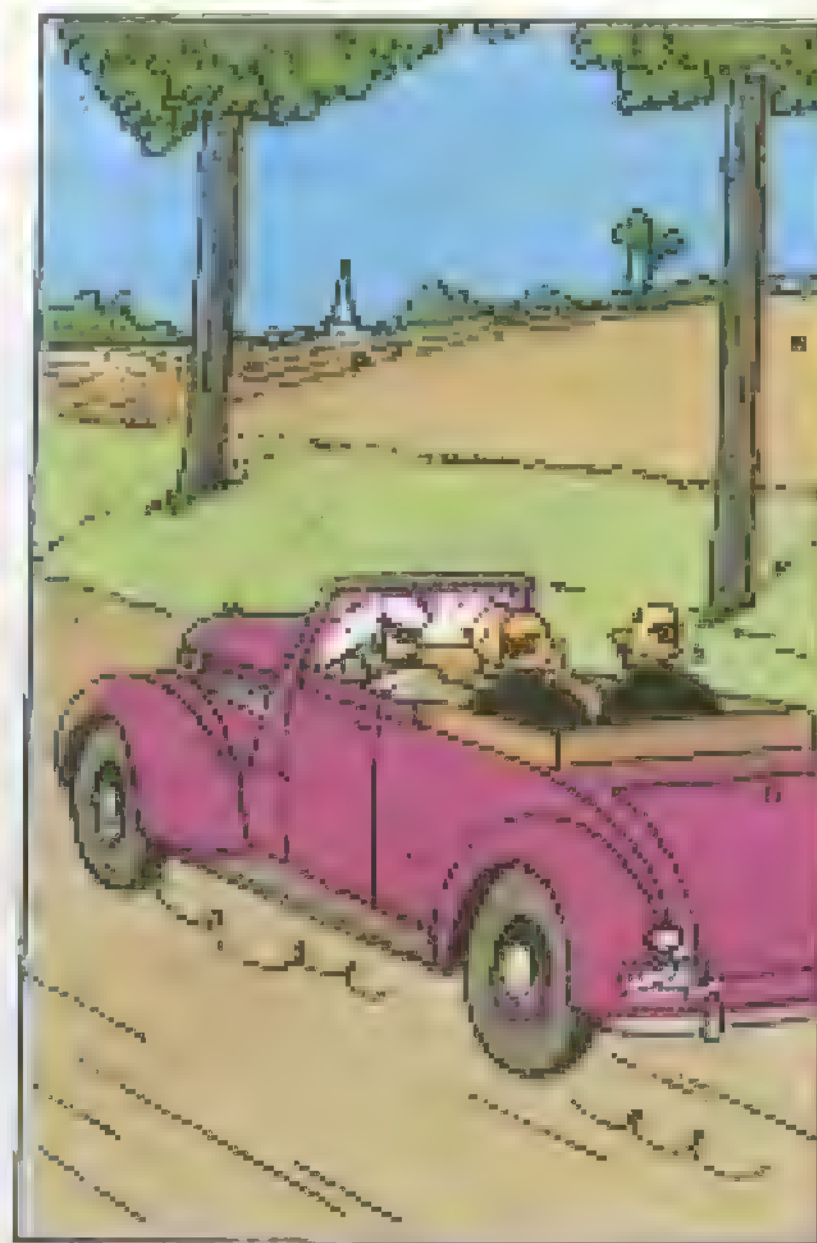
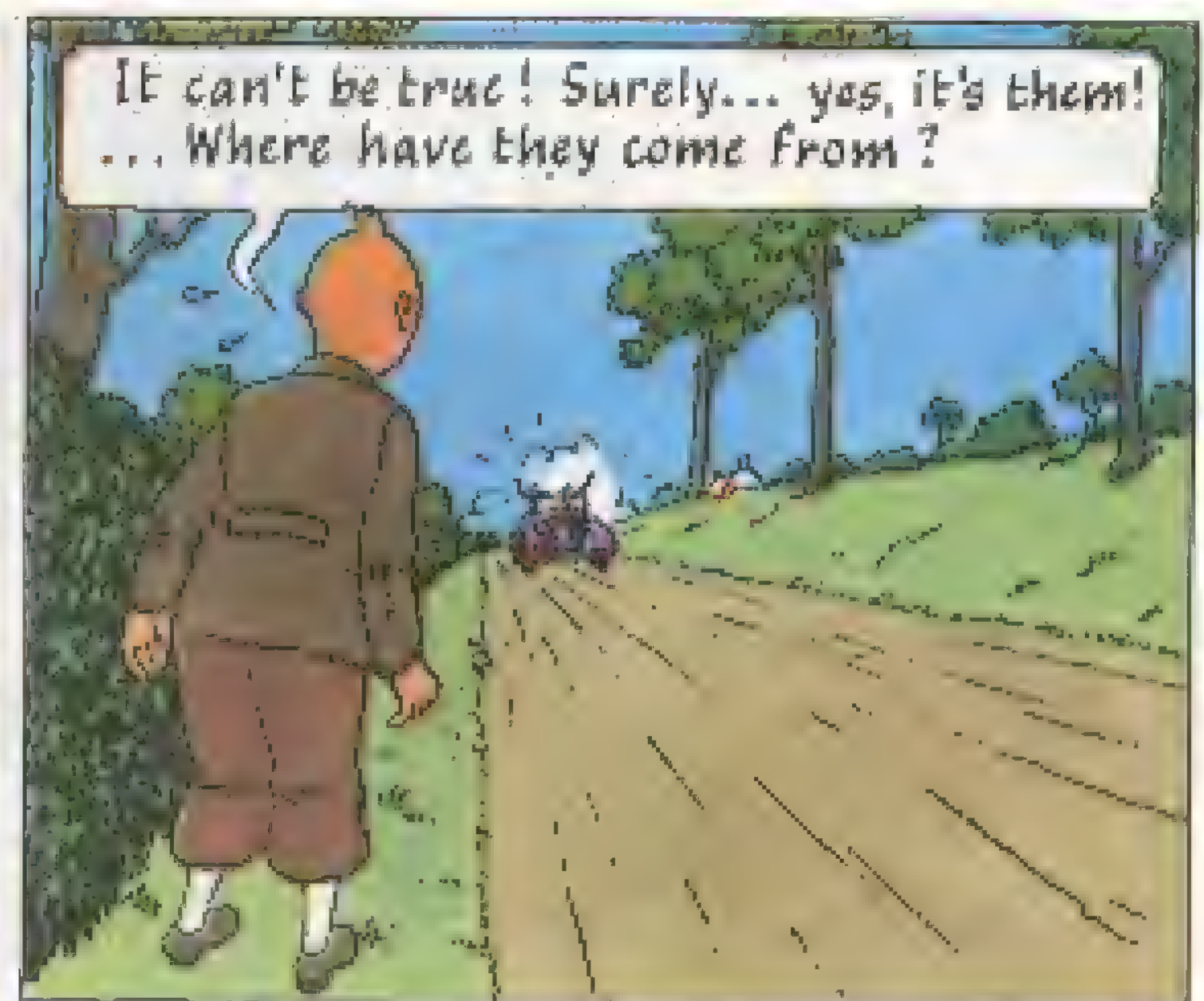








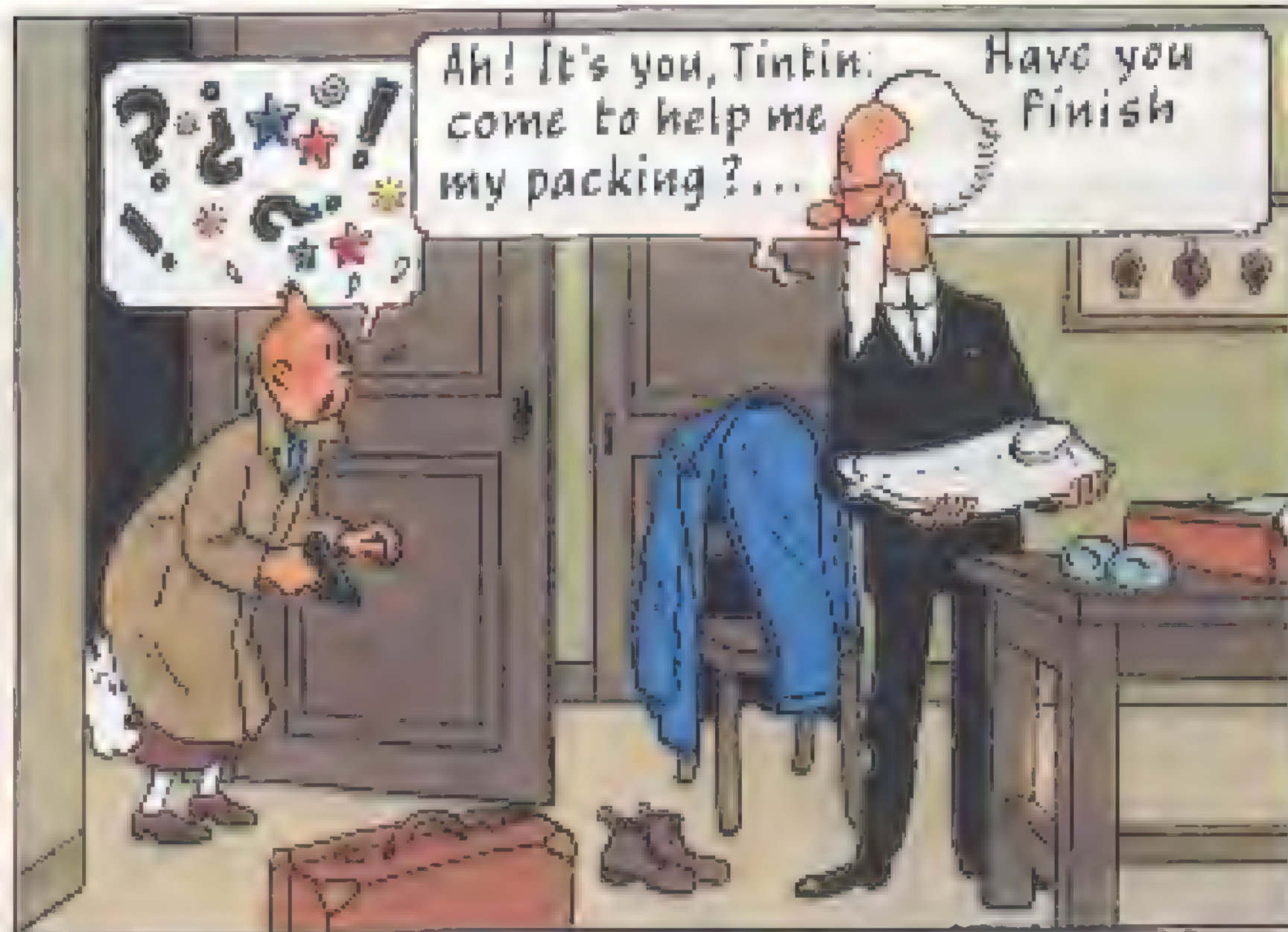








I only hope I'm not too late!...



Ah! It's you, Tintin. Have you come to help me finish my packing?...



I... I'm sorry, but I don't understand!... I thought I heard you cry out and shout for help... So I rushed straight round...

Me shouting for help? I'm afraid I don't know what you're talking about.



But it's extraordinary!... I can't have been dreaming!... I quite definitely heard shouts for help...

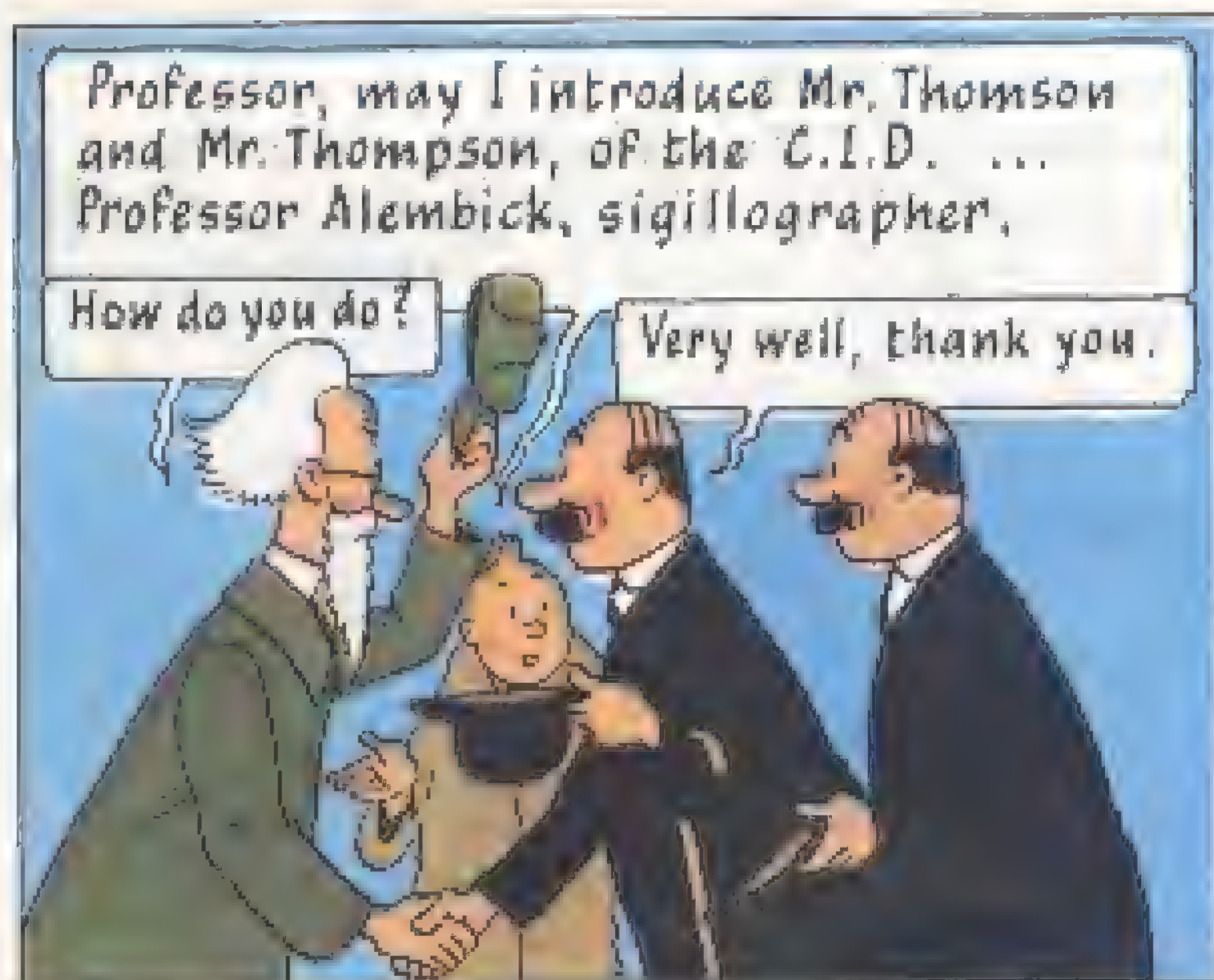


Next morning...

It's very kind of you to come and see me off.

But of course we've come...

To be precise: of course...



Professor, may I introduce Mr. Thomson and Mr. Thompson, of the C.I.D. ... Professor Alembick, sigillographer.

How do you do?

Very well, thank you.

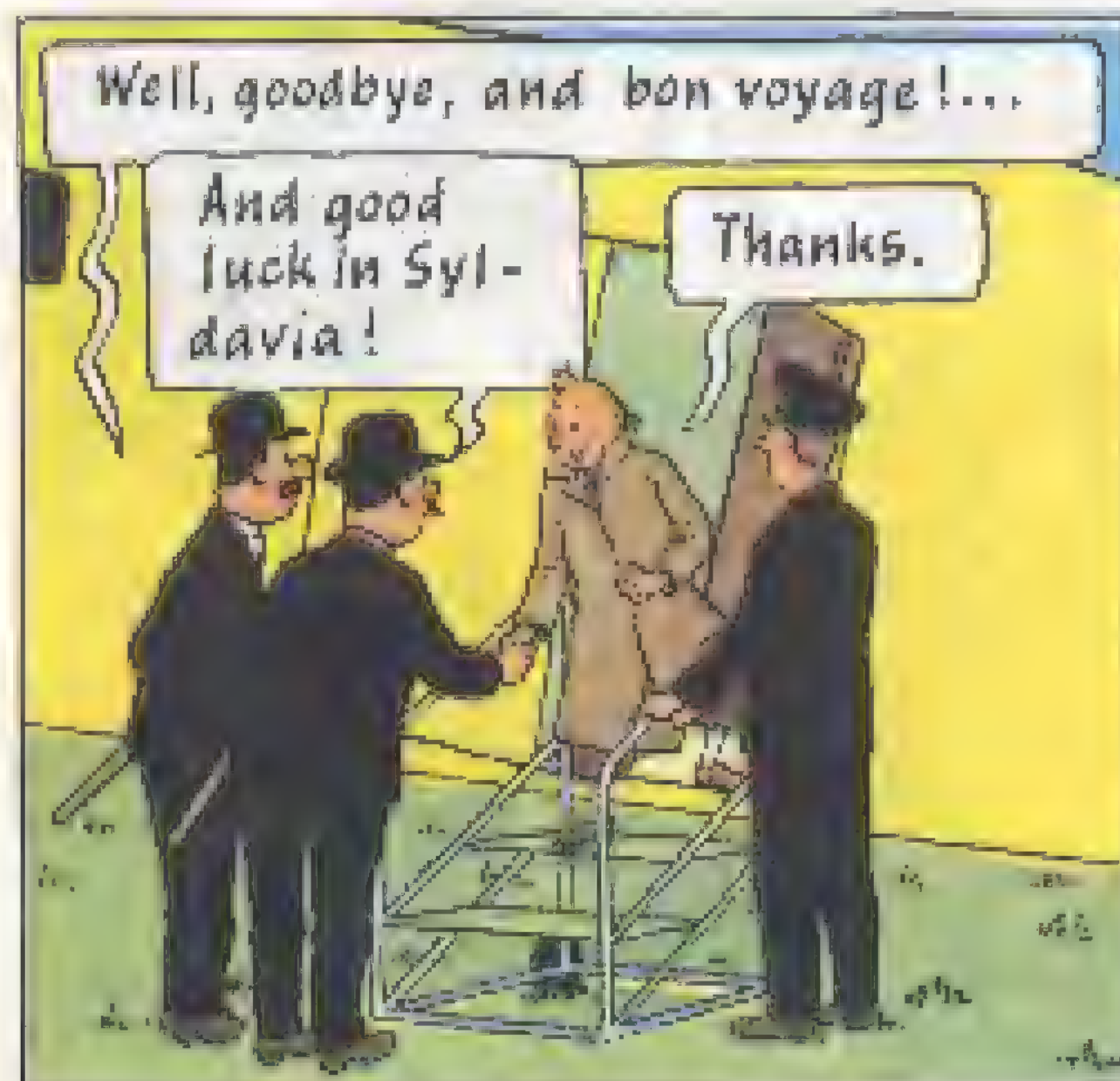


Oh, you've got new hats?

Yes, aren't they smart?... Pure English felt, extra-light: only £3-95. Wonderful bargain!



All passengers for Prague, this way please...



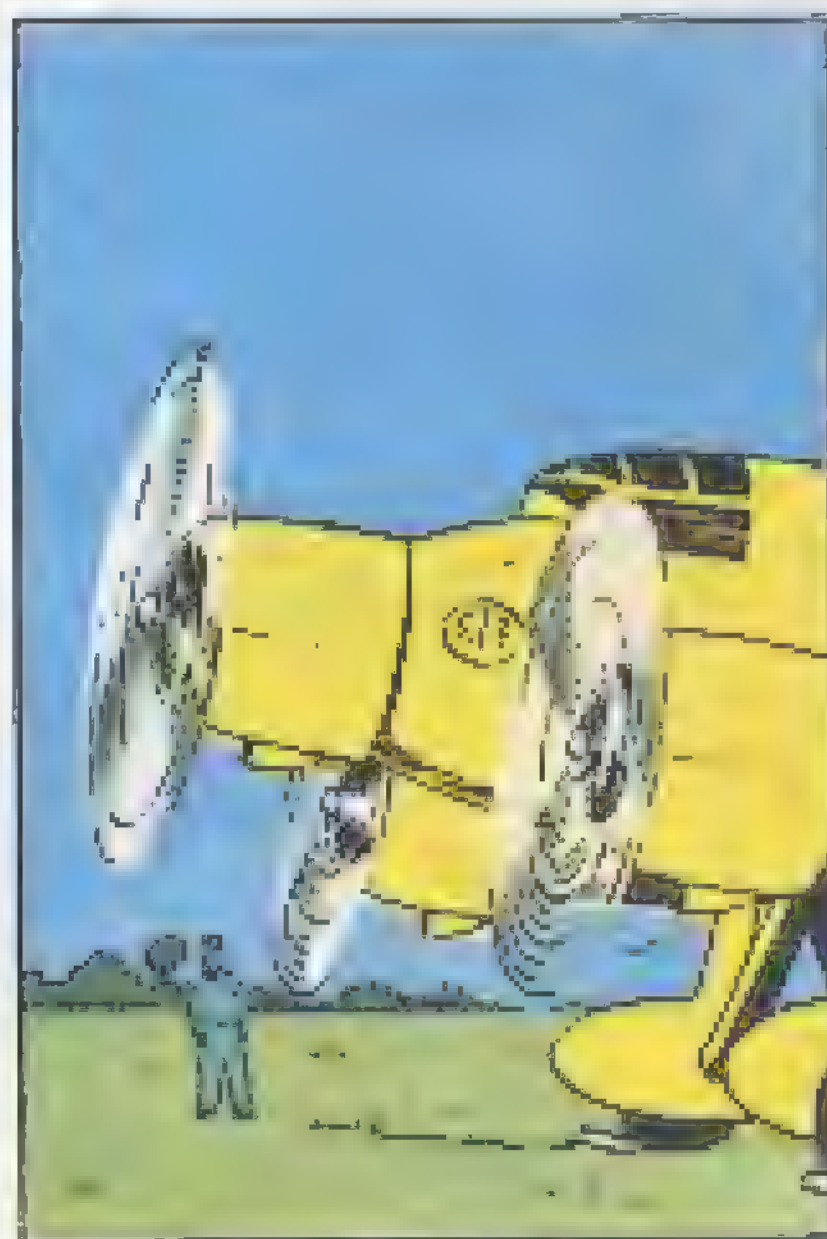
Well, goodbye, and bon voyage!...

And good luck in Syl-davia!

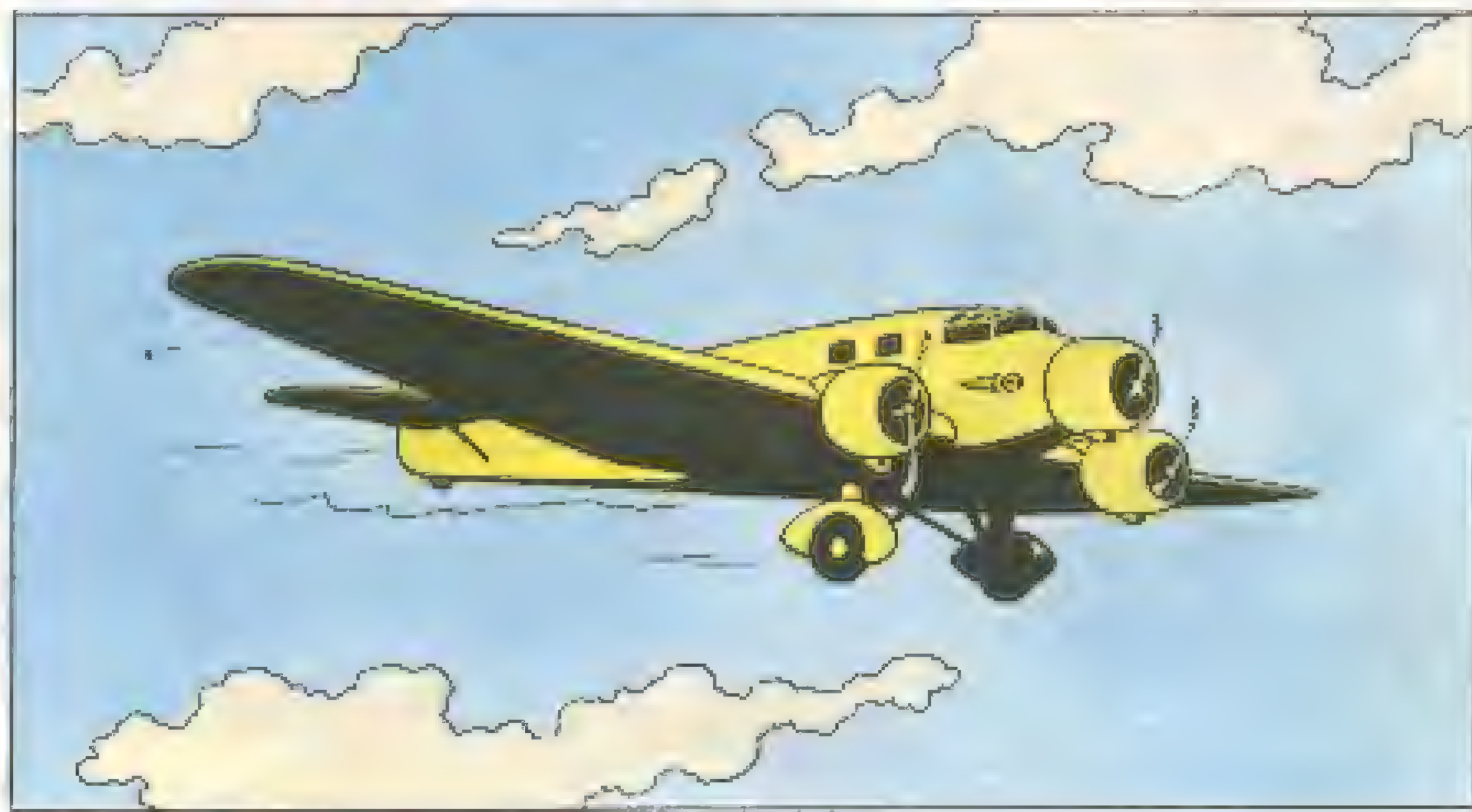
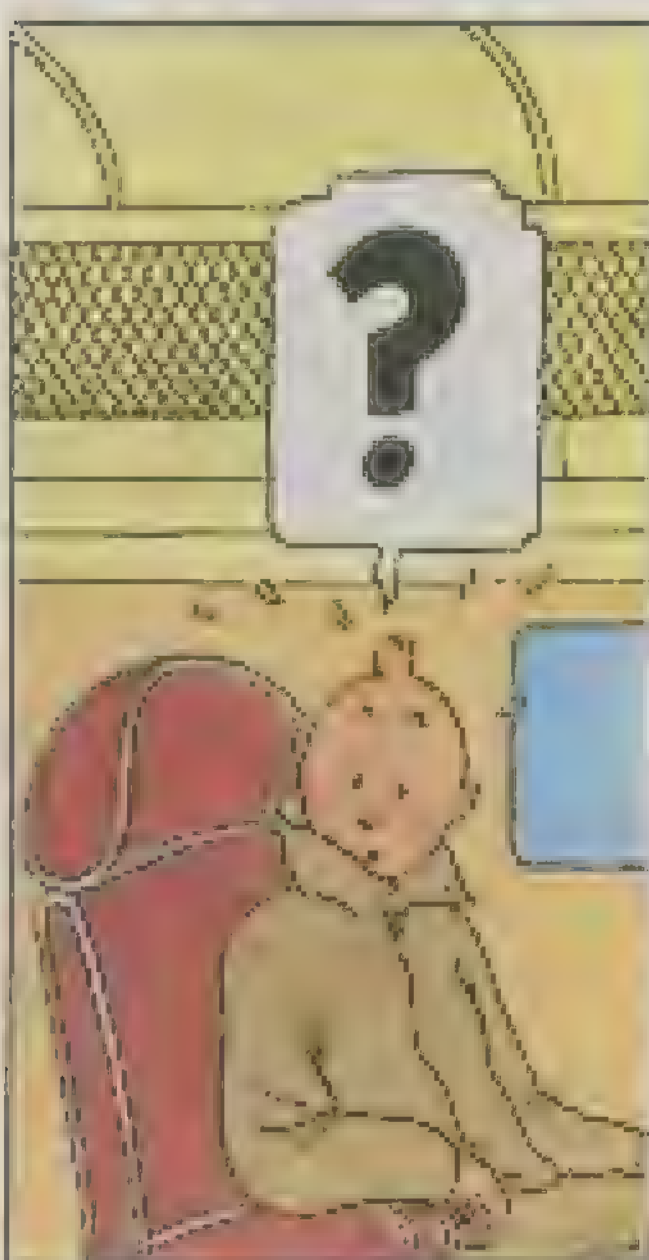
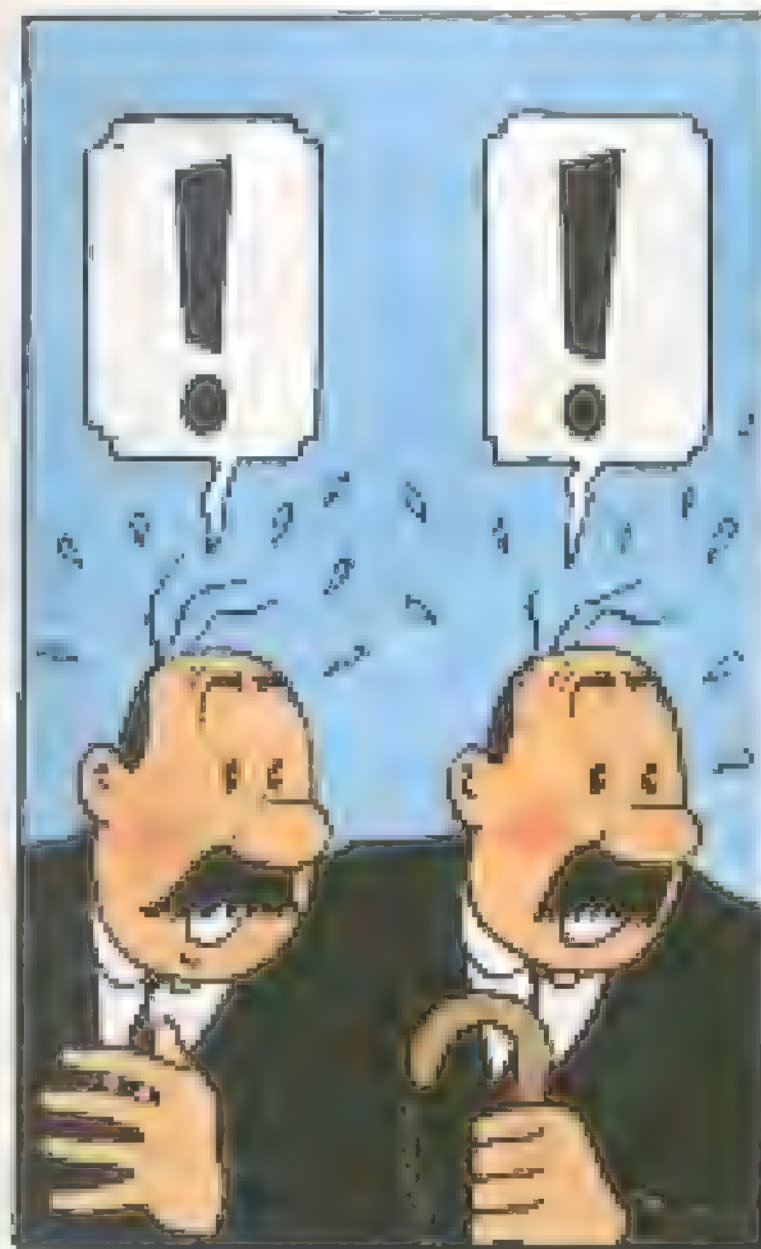
Thanks.



Compression! Petrol on! Contact!











Aha!...



Here's some good news... The Syldavian government has put a special aircraft at our disposal. Look...

'Professor Alembick, passenger aboard aircraft No. 573 OO-AGE. Frankfurt Airport. Special plane for Klow will meet you at Prague. Stop. Best wishes!... It's signed Schlozitch, Air Minister,...



Sweets... Sandwiches... Chocolates... Cigarettes...

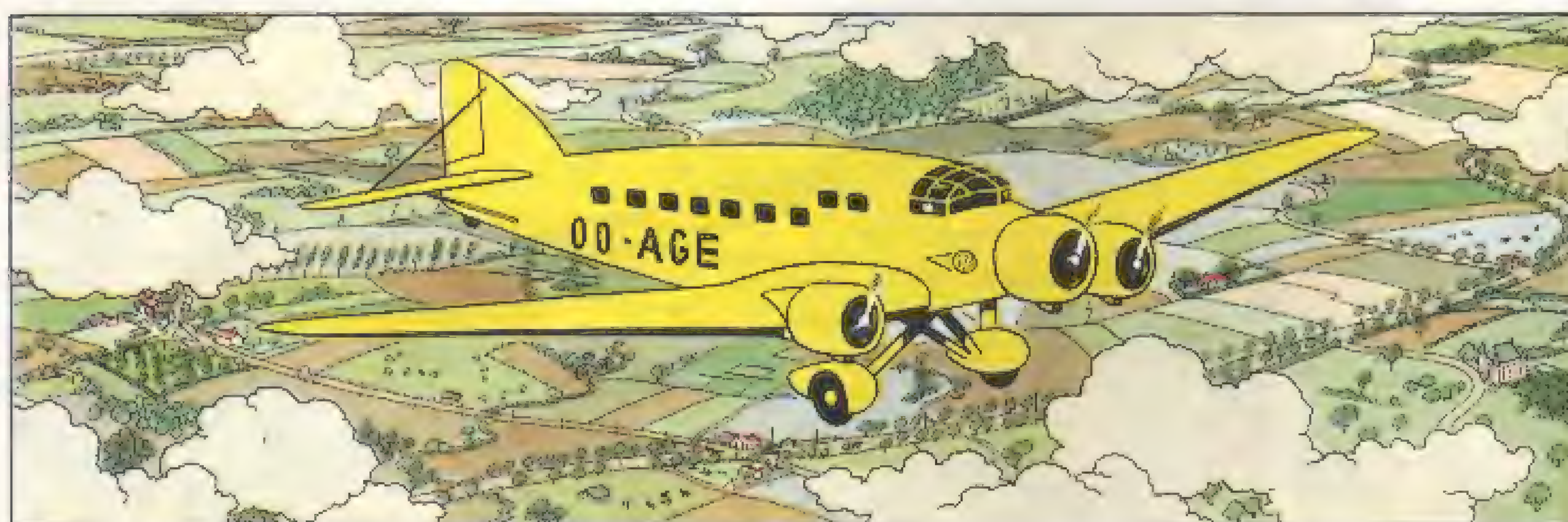
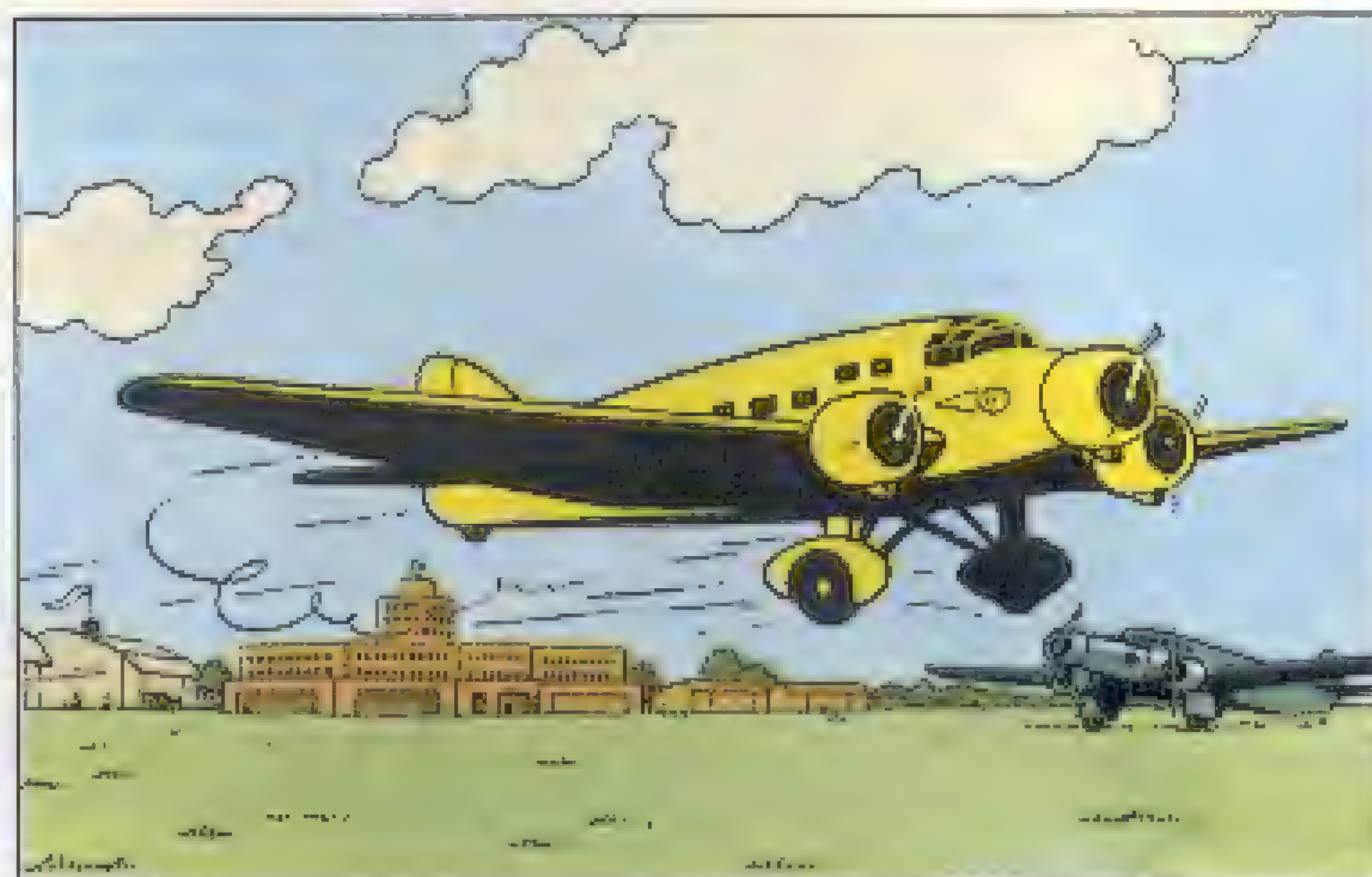


I think they're calling us...

?



All passengers for Prague, please take your seats in the aircraft...



It's really very odd...



Oh, well, let's forget it and look at this brochure...



SYLDAVIA  
KINGDOM OF THE  
BLACK  
PELICAN



# SYLDAVIA

## THE KINGDOM OF THE BLACK PELICAN

**A**MONG the many enchanting places which deservedly attract foreign visitors with a love for picturesque ceremony and colourful folklore, there is one small country which, although relatively unknown, surpasses many others in interest. Isolated until modern times because of its inaccessible position, this country is now served by a regular air-line network, which brings it within the reach of all who love unspoiled beauty, the proverbial hospitality of a peasant people, and the charm of medieval customs which still survive despite the march of progress.

This is Syldavia.

Syldavia is a small country in Eastern Europe, comprising two great valleys: those of the river Vladir, and its tributary, the Moltus. The rivers meet at Klow, the capital (122,000 inhabitants). These valleys are flanked by wide plateaux covered with forests, and are surrounded by high, snow-capped mountains. In the fertile Syldavian plains are corn-lands and cattle pastures. The subsoil is rich in minerals of all kinds.

Numerous thermal and sulphur springs gush from the earth, the chief centres being at Klow (cardiac diseases) and Kragoniedin (rheumatic complaints).

The total population is estimated to be 642,000 inhabitants.

Syldavia exports wheat, mineral-water from Klow, firewood, horses and violinists.

### HISTORY OF SYLDAVIA

Until the VIth century, Syldavia was inhabited by nomadic tribes of unknown origin.

Overrun by the Slavs in the VIth century, the country was conquered in the XIth century by the Turks, who drove the Slavs into the mountains and occupied the plains.

In 1127, Hveghi, leader of a Slav tribe, swooped down from the mountains at the head of a band of partisans and fell upon isolated Turkish villages, putting all who resisted him to the sword. Thus he rapidly became master of a large part of Syldavian territory.

A great battle took place in the valley of the Moltus near Zileheroum, the Turkish capital of Syldavia, between the Turkish army and Hveghi's irregulars.

Enfeebled by long inactivity and badly led by incompetent officers, the Turkish army put up little resistance and fled in disorder.

Having vanquished the Turks, Hveghi was elected king, and given the name Muskar, that is, The Brave (Muskh: 'brave' and Kar: 'king').

The capital, Zileheroum, was renamed Klow, that is, Freetown, (Kloho: 'to free', and Ow: 'town').



Guard at the Royal Treasure House, Klow



A typical fisherman from Dhrnouk  
(south coast of Syldavia)

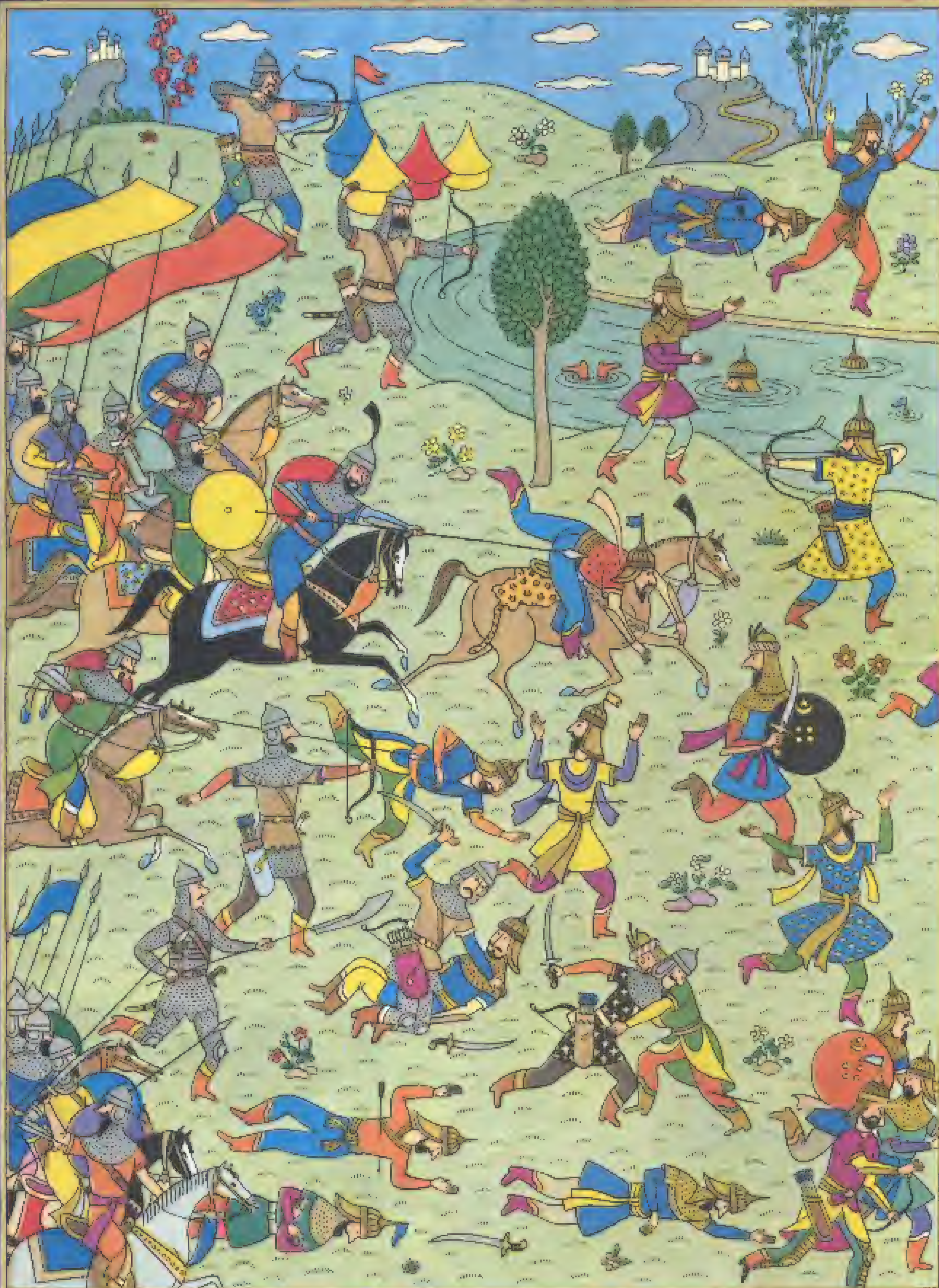


◀ Syldavian peasant  
on her way to market



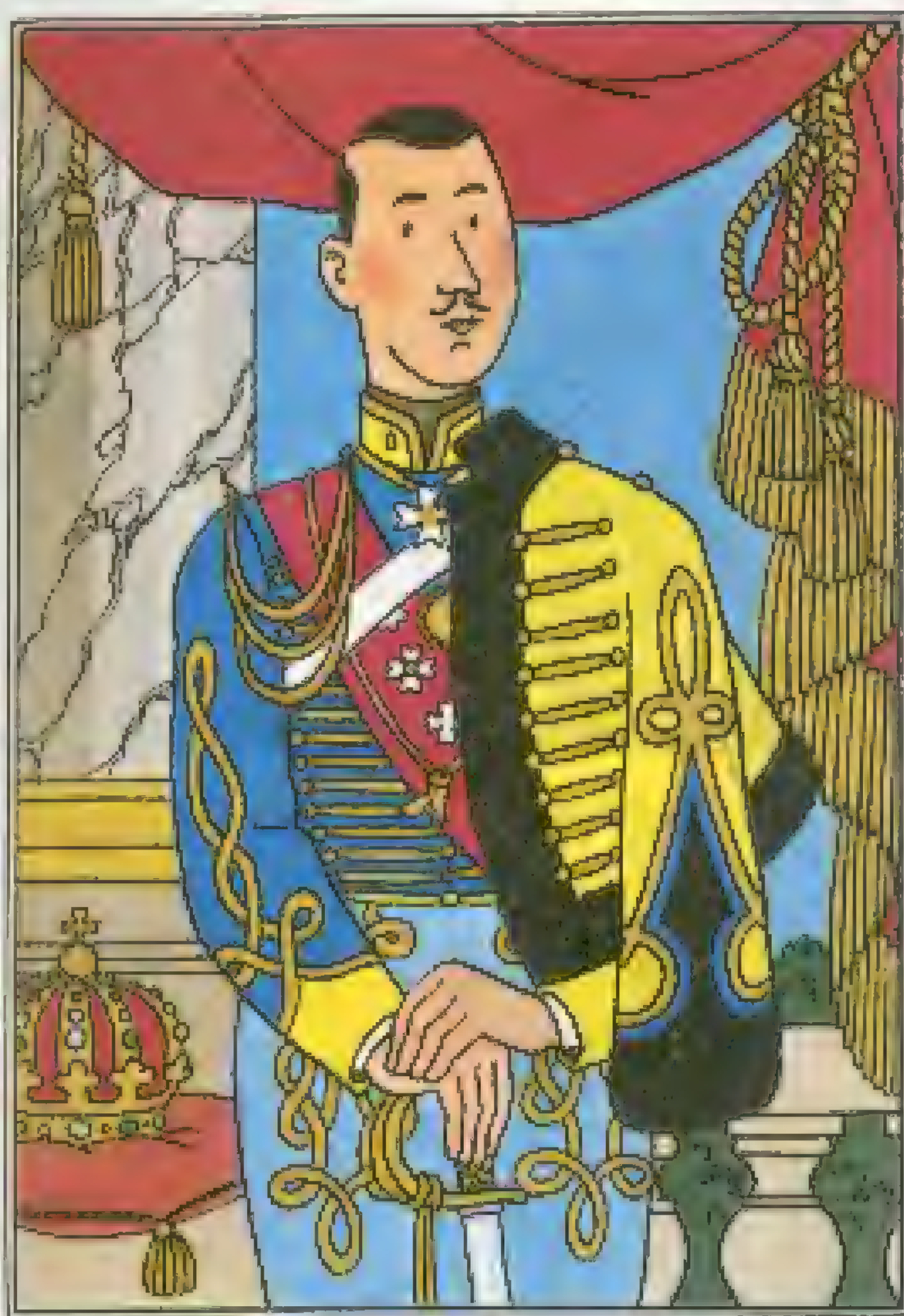
A view of Niedzdrow,  
in the Vladir valley ▶





THE BATTLE OF ZILEHEROUM  
*After a XVth century miniature*





*H.M. King Muskar XII, the present ruler of Syldavia in the uniform of Colonel of the Guards*

struck him a blow on the head with the sceptre, laying him low and at the same time crying in Syldavian: 'Eih bennek, eih blarek!', which can be said to mean: 'If you gather thistles, expect prickles'. And turning to his astonished court he said: 'Hont soit qui mal y pense!'

Then, gazing intently at his sceptre, he addressed it in the following words: 'O Sceptre, thou hast saved my life. Be henceforward the true symbol of Syldavian Kingship. Woe to the king who loses thee, for I declare that such a man shall be unworthy to rule thereafter.'

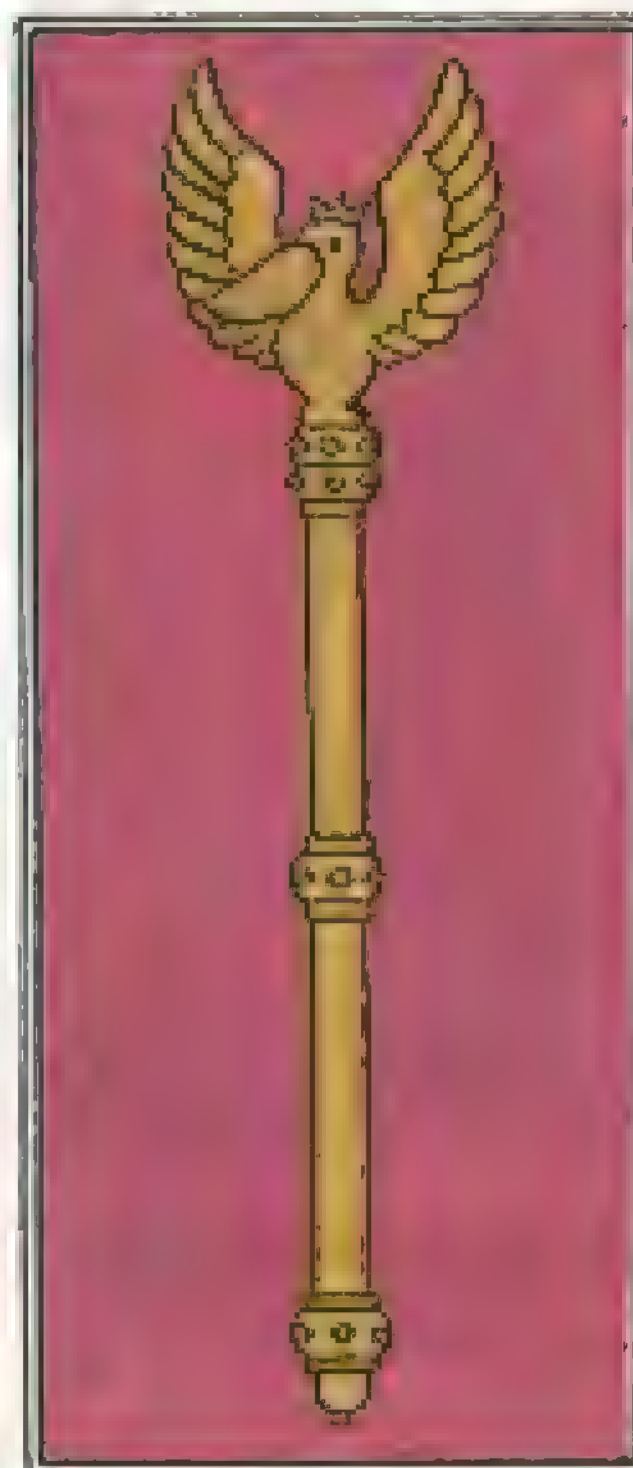
And from that time, every year on St. Vladimir's Day each successor of Ottokar IV has made a great ceremonial tour of his capital.

He bears in his hand the historic sceptre, without which he would lose the right to rule; as he passes, the people sing the famous anthem:

Syldavians unite!  
Praise our King's might:  
The Sceptre his right!

*Right: The sceptre of Ottokar IV*

*Below: An illuminated page from 'The Memorable Deeds of Ottokar IV', a XIVth century manuscript*



Muskar was a wise king who lived at peace with his neighbours, and the country prospered. He died in 1168, mourned by all his subjects.

His eldest son succeeded to the throne with the title of Muskar II.

Unlike his father, Muskar II lacked authority and was unable to keep order in his kingdom. A period of anarchy replaced one of peaceful prosperity.

In the neighbouring state of Borduria the people observed Syldavia's decline, and their king profited by this opportunity to invade the country. Borduria annexed Syldavia in 1195.

For almost a century Syldavia groaned under the foreign yoke.

In 1275 Baron Almaszout repeated the exploits of Hveghl by coming down from the hills and routing the Bordurians in less than six months.

He was proclaimed King in 1277, taking the name of Ottokar. He was, however, much less powerful than Muskar.

The barons who had helped him in the campaign against the Bordurians forced him to grant them a charter, based on the English Magna Carta signed by King John (Lackland). This marked the beginning of the feudal system in Syldavia.

Ottokar I of Syldavia should not be confused with the Ottokars (Premysls) who were Dukes, and later Kings, of Bohemia.

This period was noteworthy for the rise in power of the nobles, who fortified their castles and maintained bands of armed mercenaries, strong enough to oppose the King's forces.

But the true founder of the kingdom of Syldavia was Ottokar IV, who ascended the throne in 1370.

From the time of his accession he initiated widespread reforms. He raised a powerful army and subdued the arrogant nobles, confiscating their wealth.

He fostered the advancement of the arts, of letters, commerce and agriculture.

He united the whole nation and gave it that security, both at home and abroad, so necessary for the renewal of prosperity.

It was he who pronounced those famous words: 'Eih bennek, eih blarek', which have become the motto of Syldavia.

The origin of this saying is as follows:

One day Baron Staszvich, son of one of the dispossessed nobles whose lands had been forfeited to the crown, came before the sovereign and recklessly claimed the throne of Syldavia.

The King listened in silence, but when the presumptuous baron's speech ended with a demand that he deliver up his sceptre, the King rose and cried fiercely: 'Come and get it!'

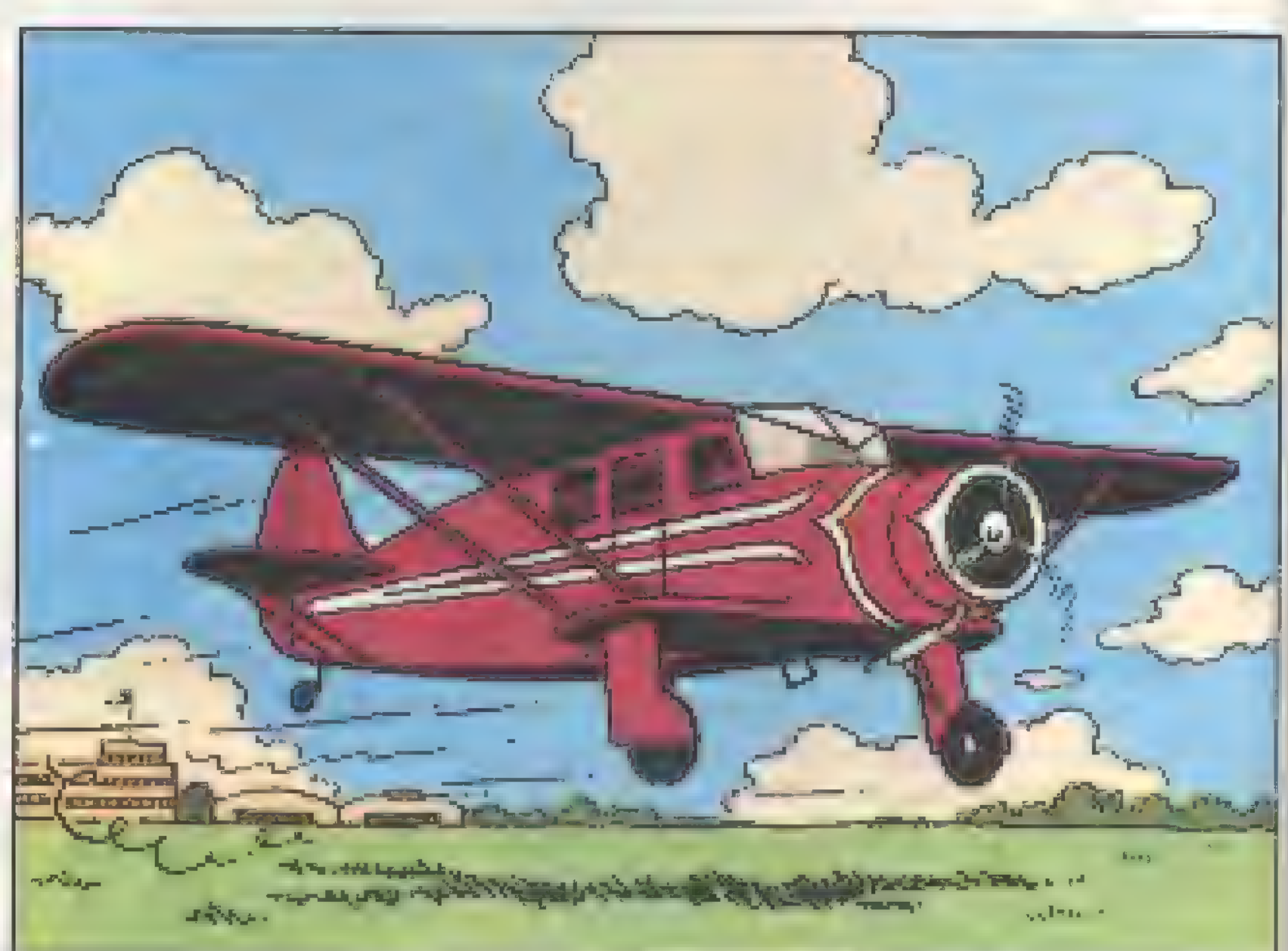
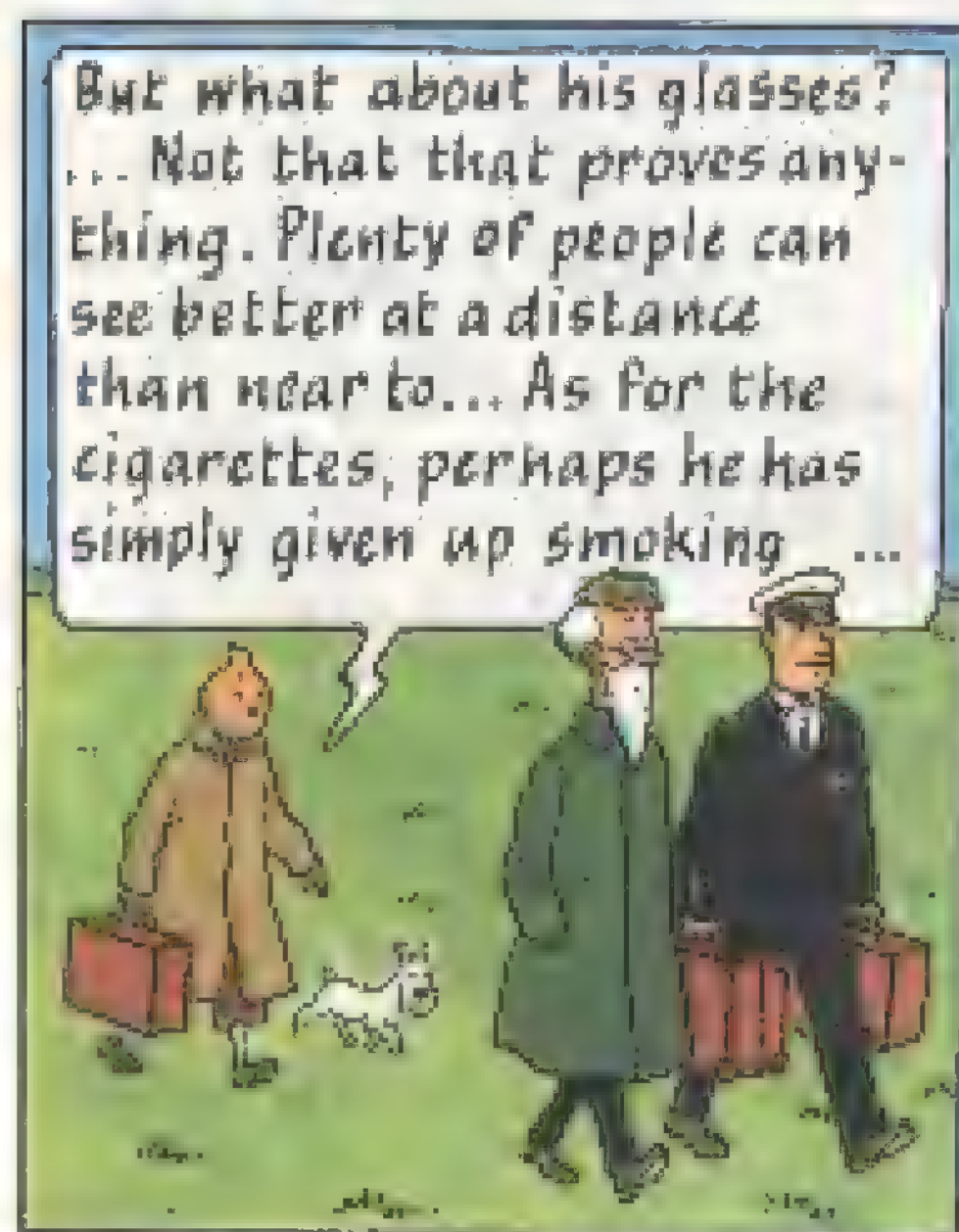
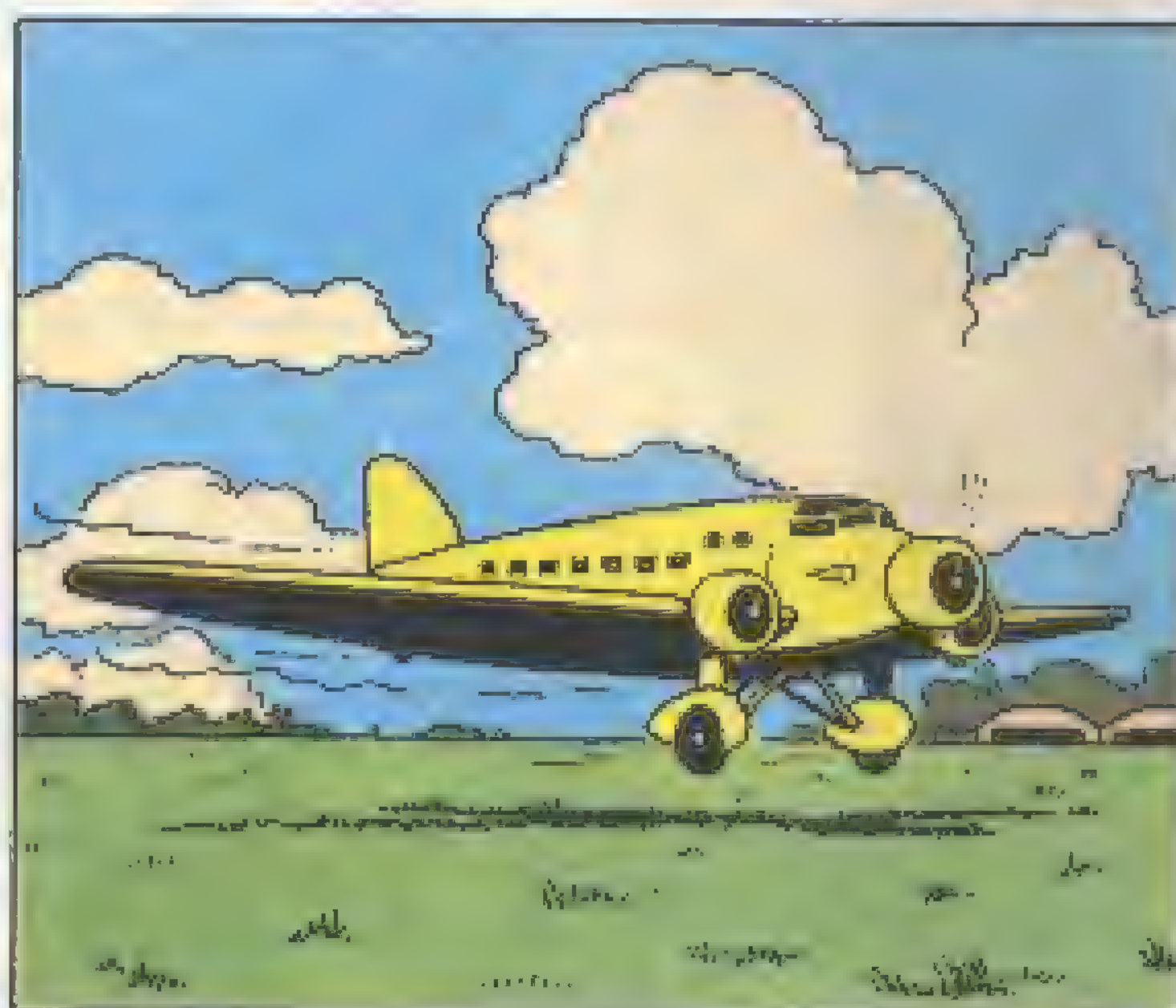
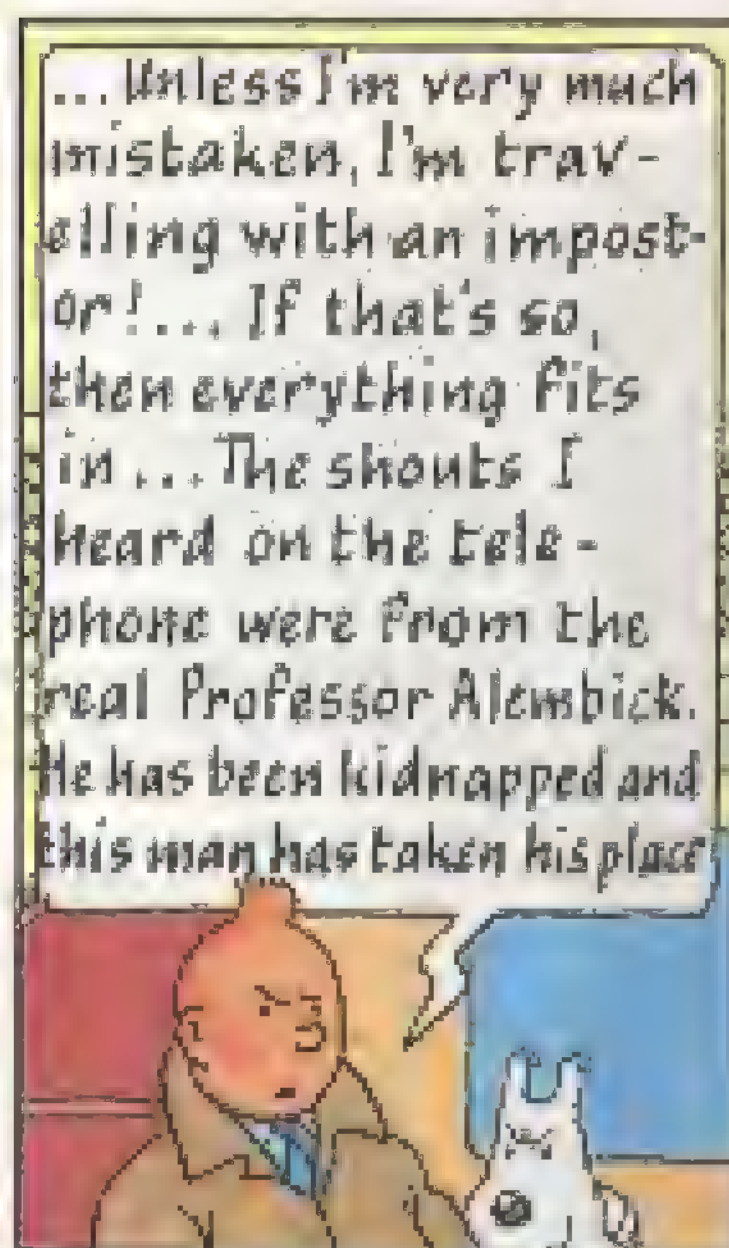
Mad with rage, the young baron drew his sword, and before the retainers could intervene, fell upon the King.

The King stepped swiftly aside, and as his adversary passed him, carried forward by the impetus of his charge, Ottokar

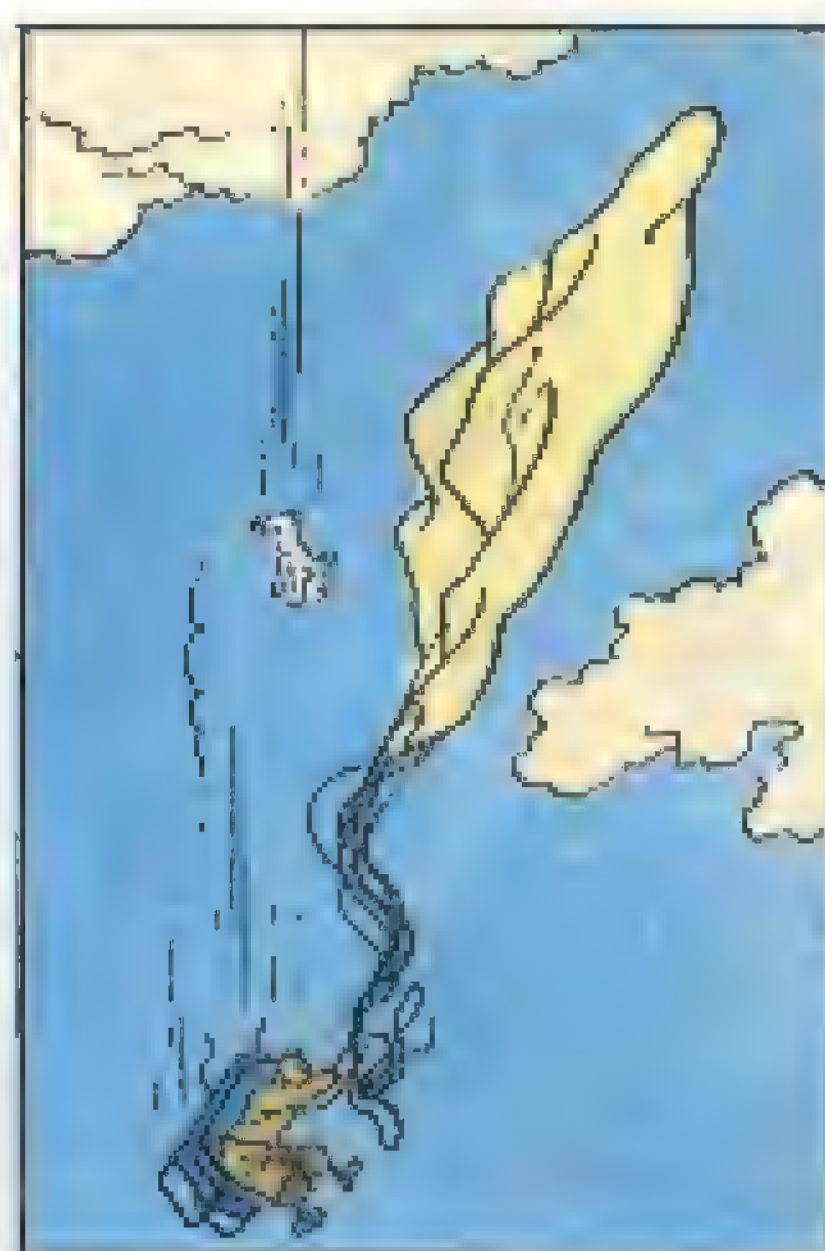
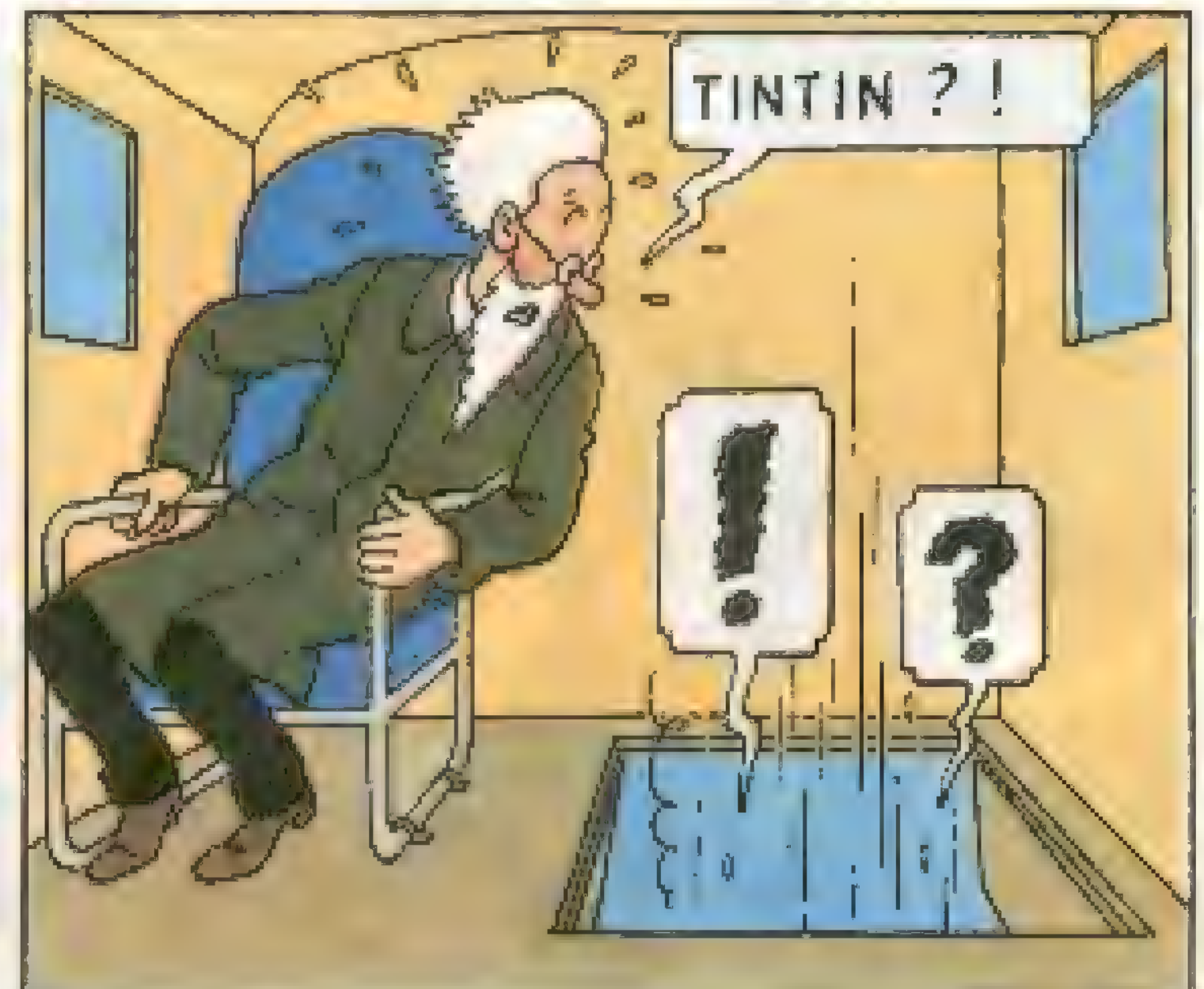


**P**ir Ottokar  
dūs pollez  
ez kōnikstz  
dan fronn ezt pho  
mā Źzeillā ezai:  
dā ōn elteār alpū  
kzommetz pakkē:  
o lapzāda kōnikstz  
itd o alpū klōppz:  
staszvichez erom  
szūbel ō. Dāzbiek  
tālka ōpp o cārro.

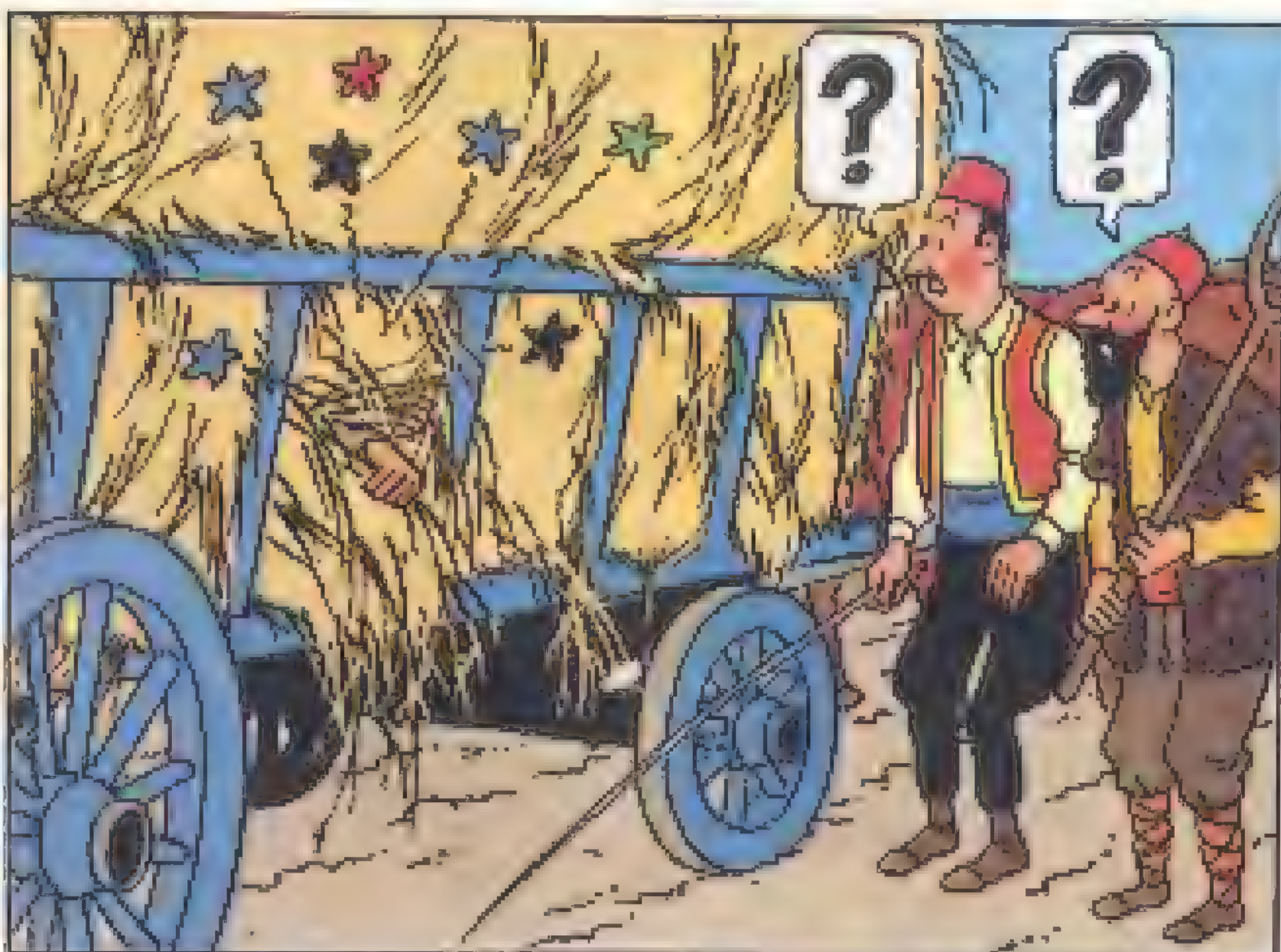
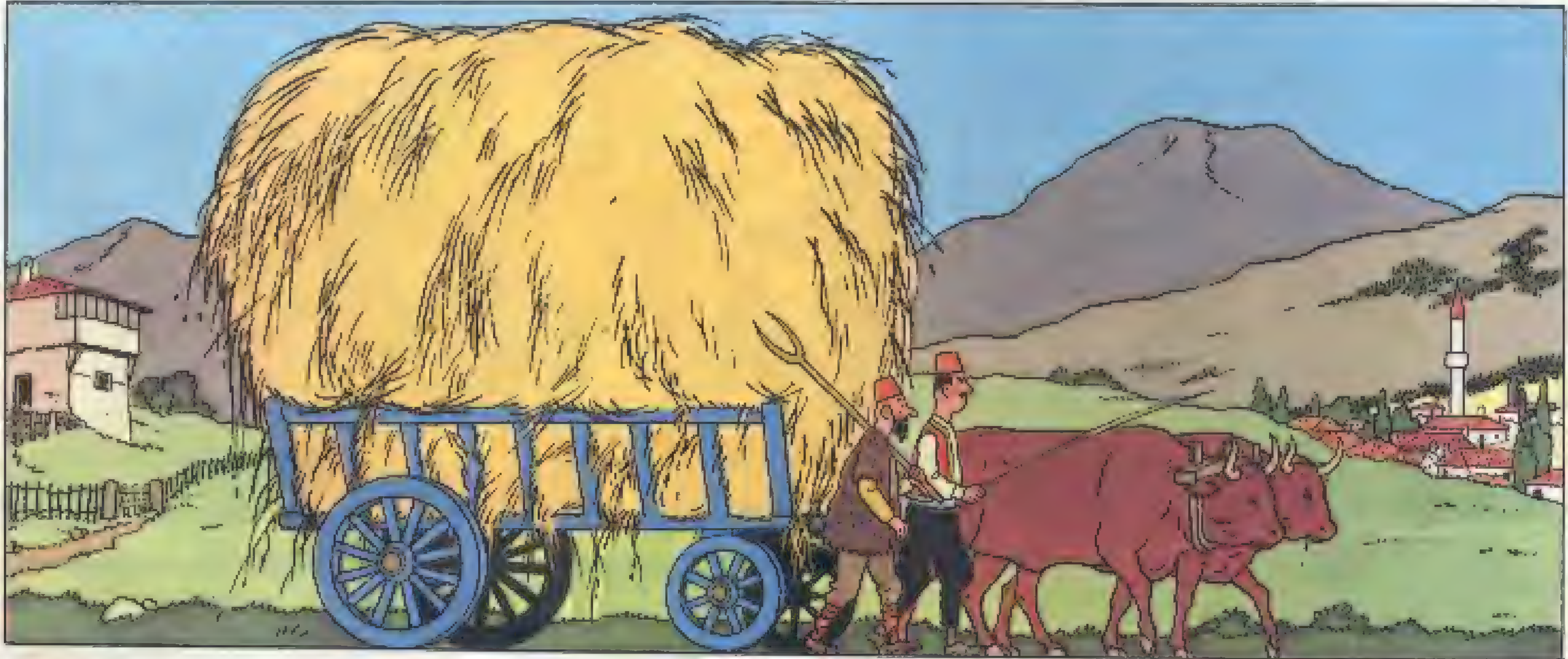
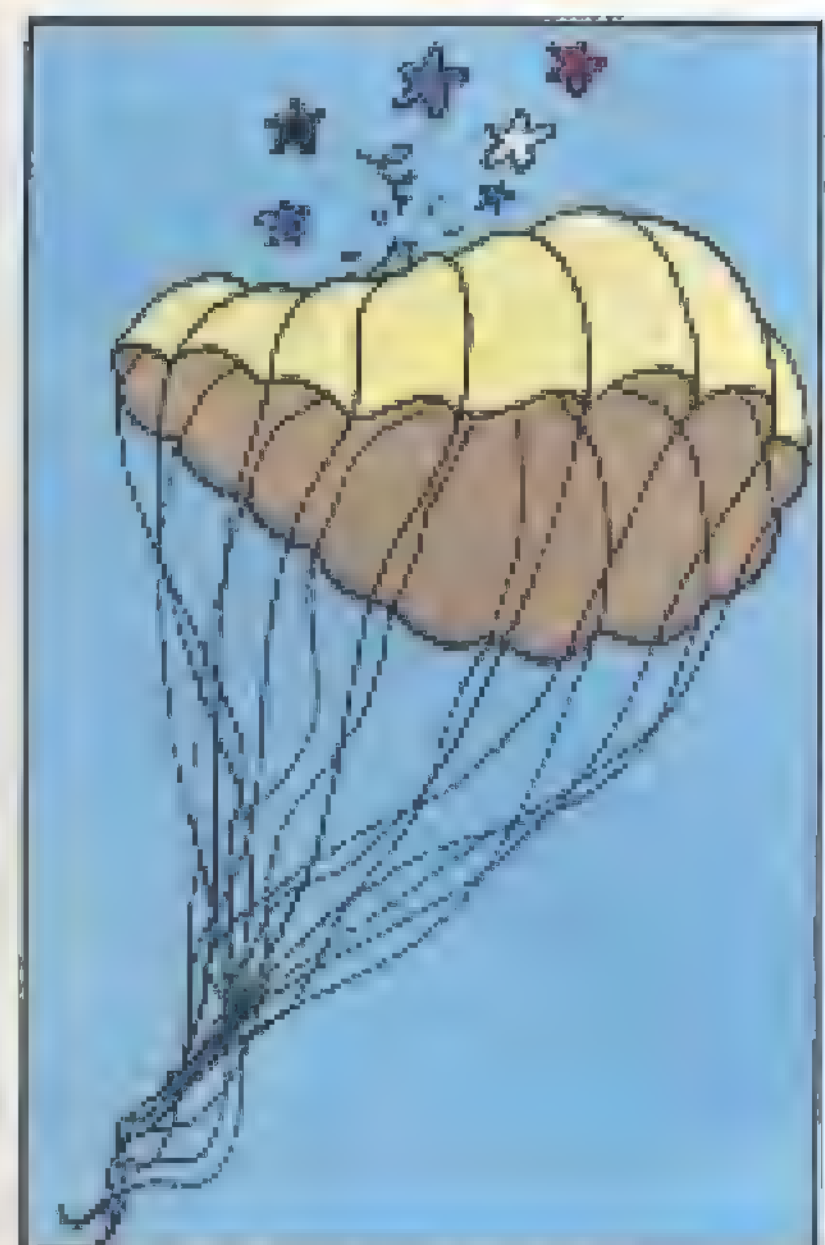








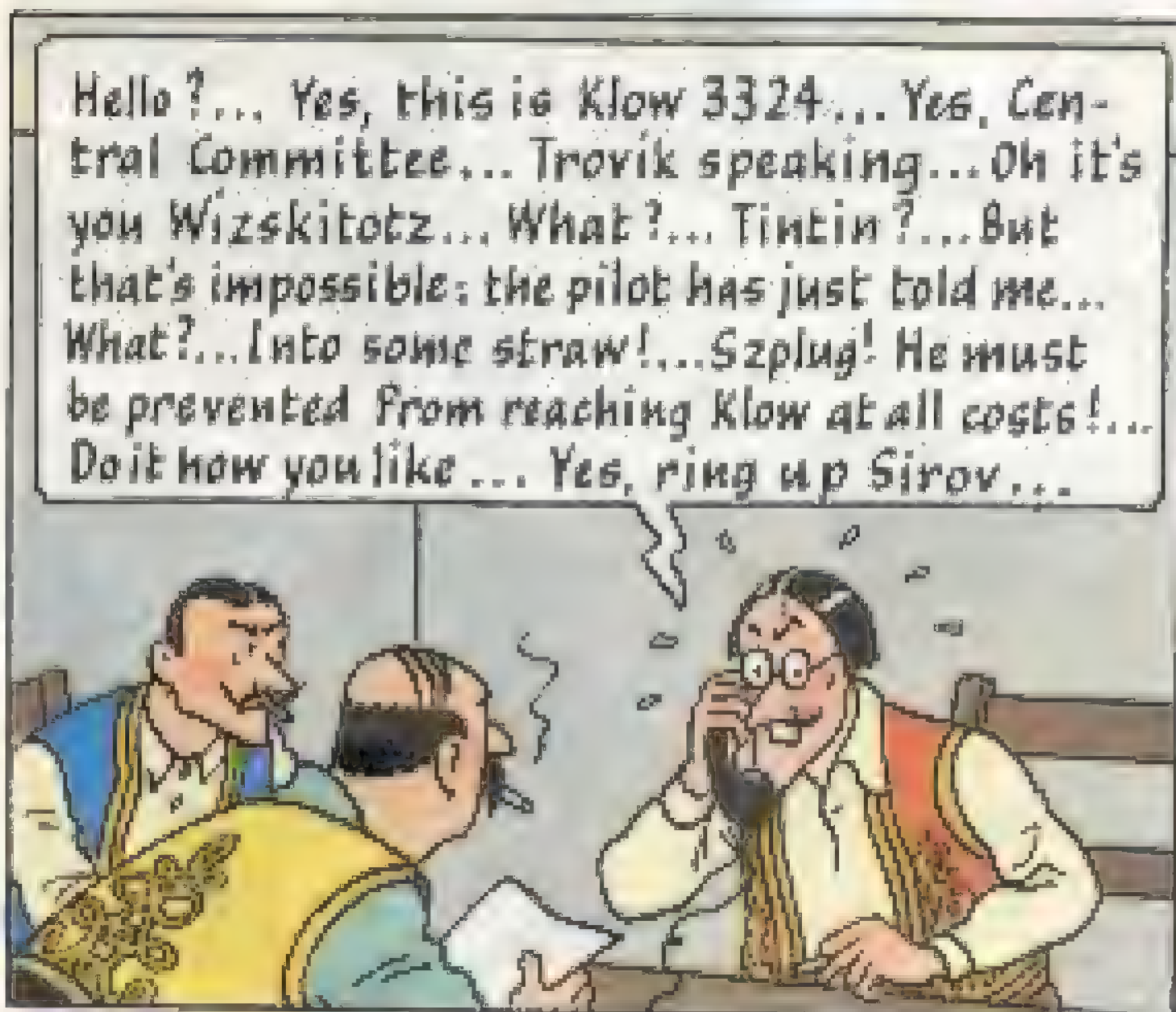
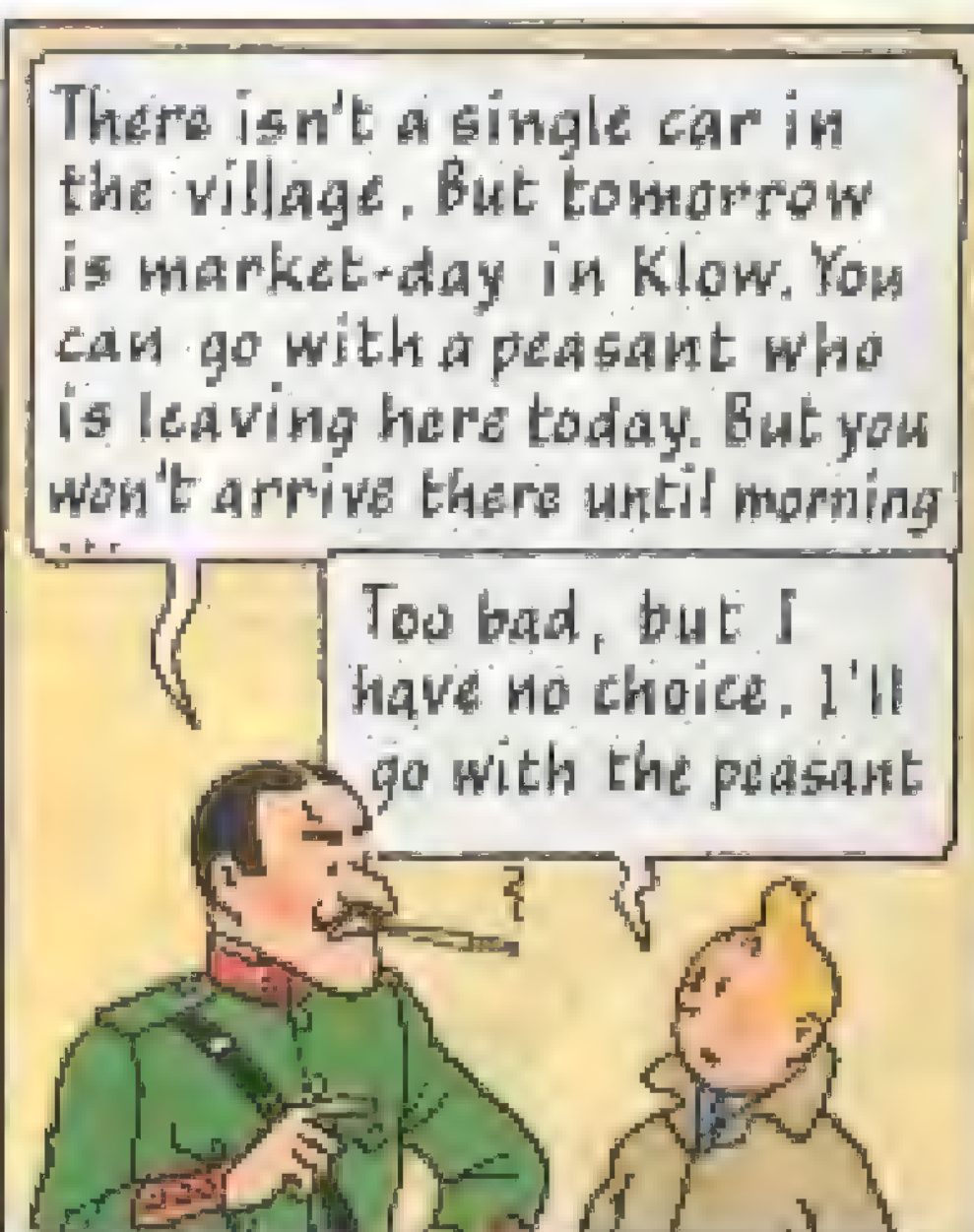
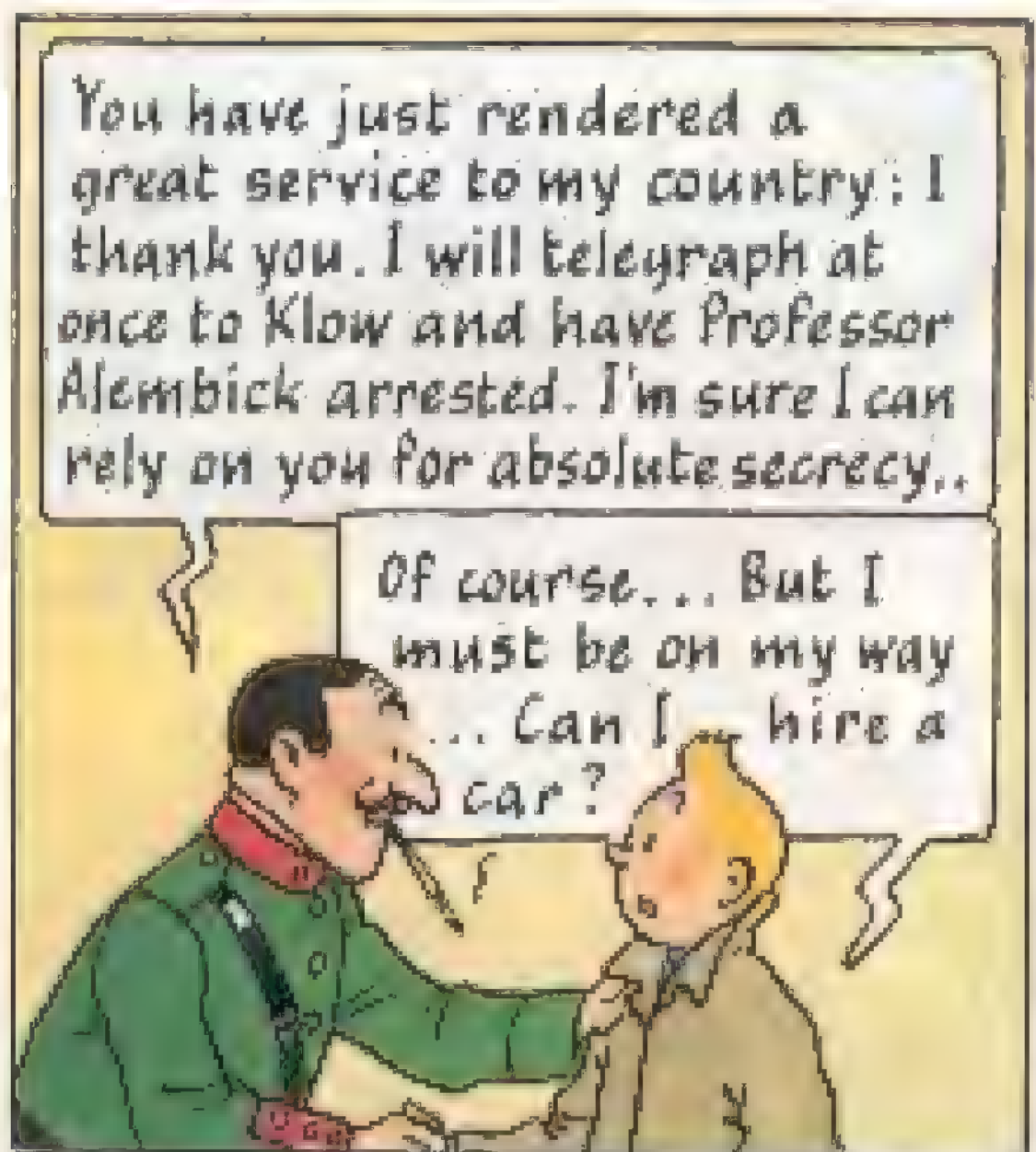
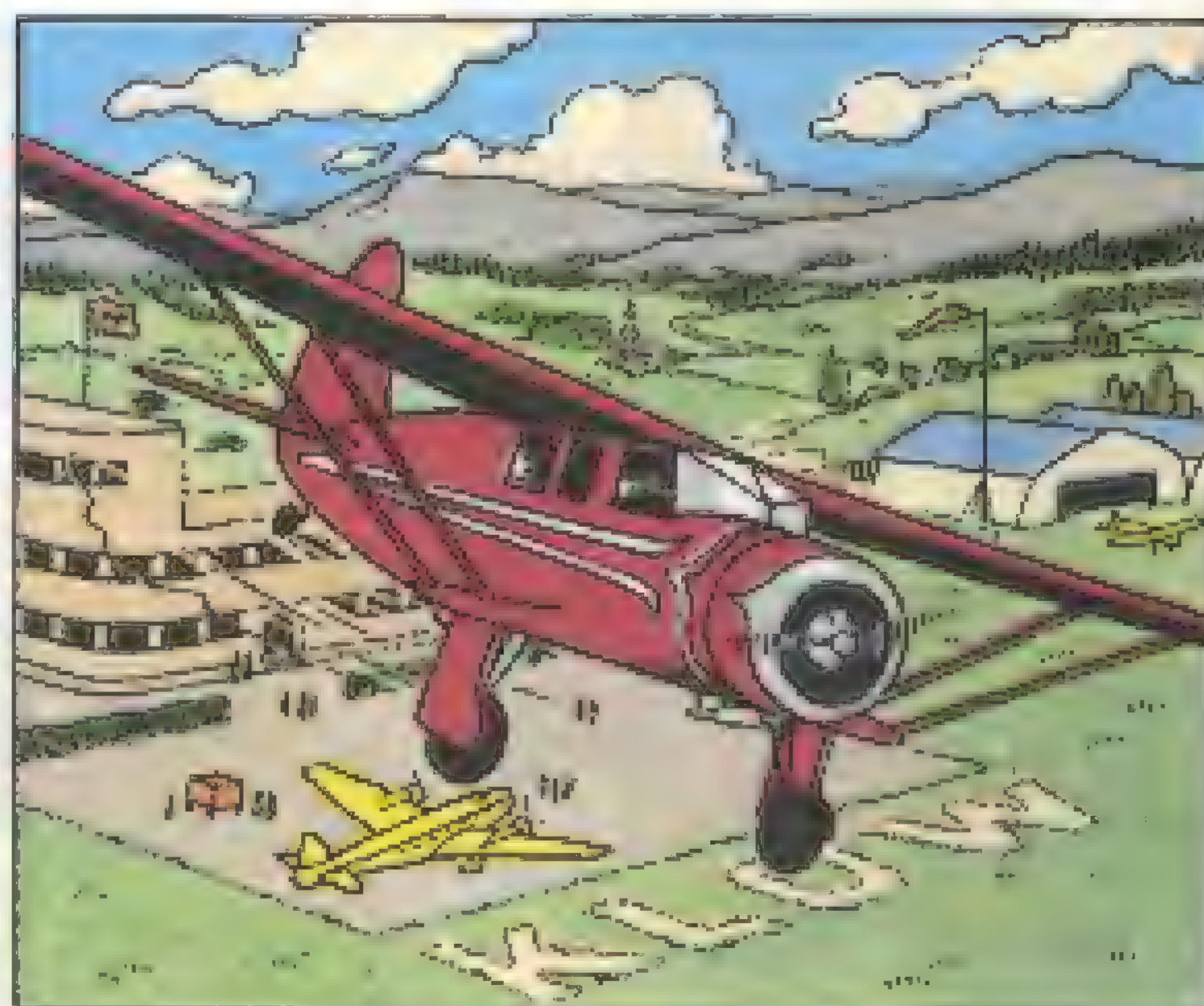




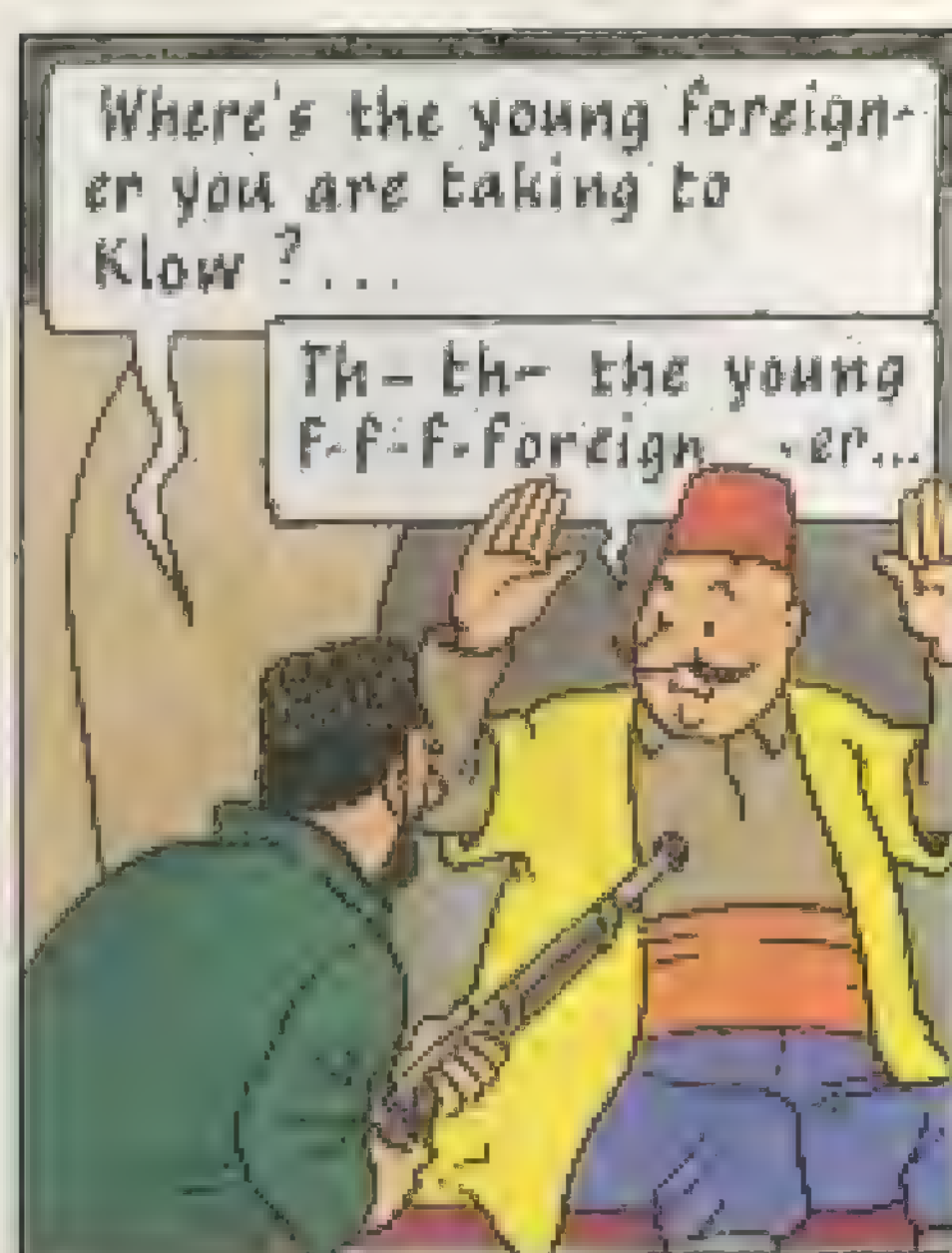












Where's the young foreigner you are taking to Klow?...

Th-th-the young f-f-f-foreign-er...



That's enough!... We know he's with you!... Search the cart, Zlop!

Th-th-the f-f-foreign...er who..who w-w-w



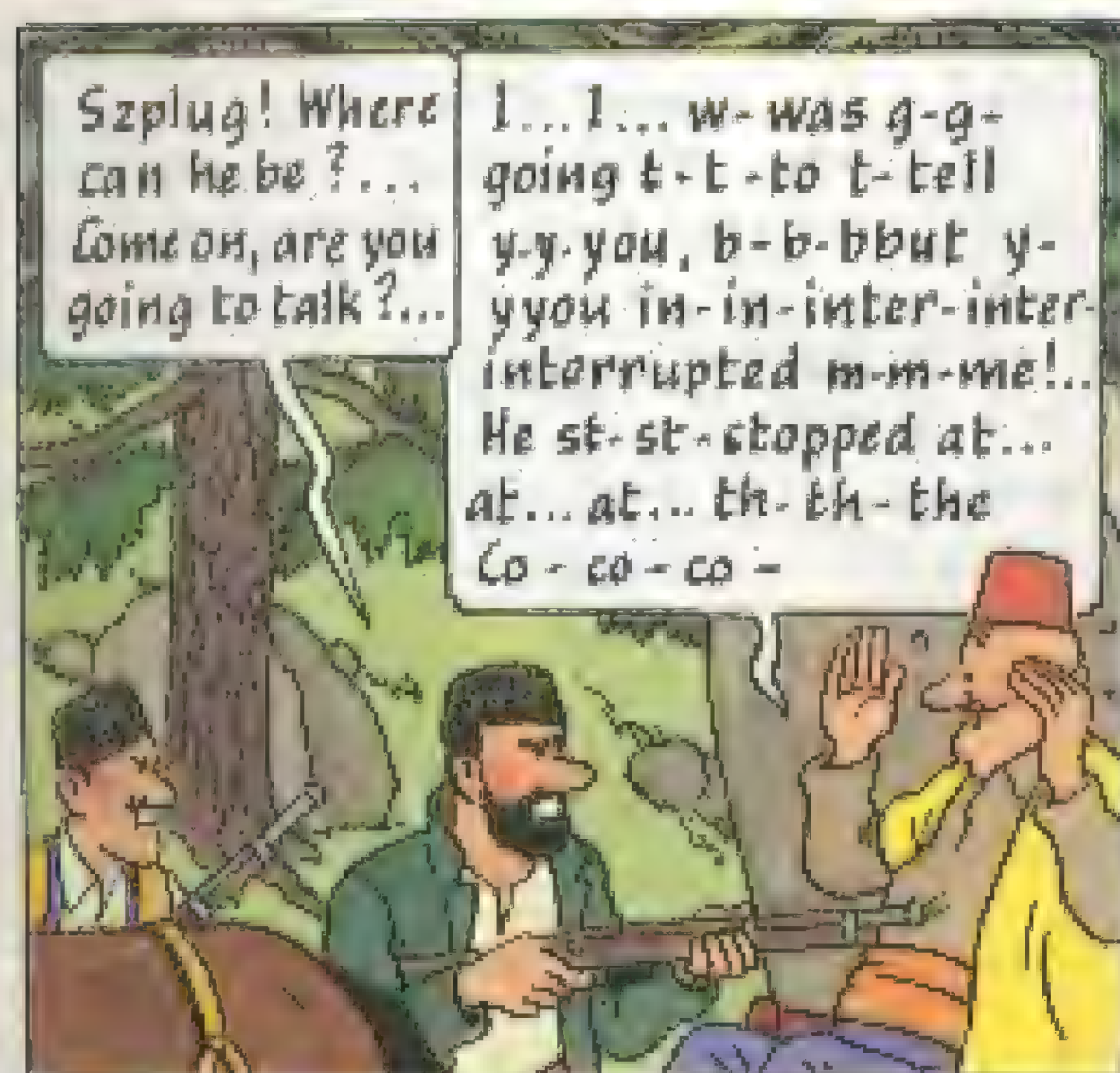
Was w-w-w-with w-w-me?...

What makes you stutter like that?... Fear? ...



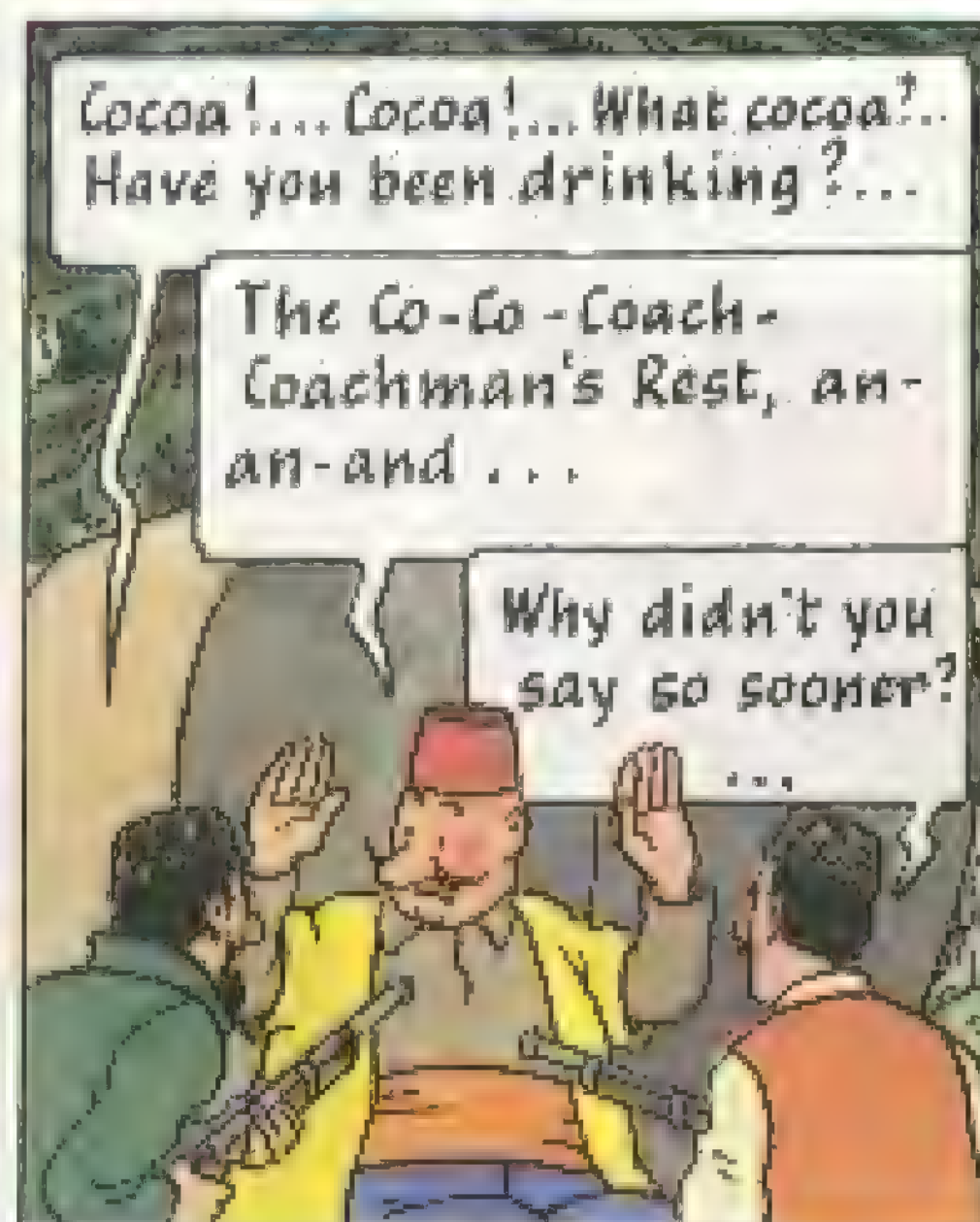
N-n-no! ...It...it...it... it's b-b-be-because...I...I... I t-t-talk... talk... talk...

Sirov! There's no one there!



Szplug! Where can he be?... Come on, are you going to talk?...

I...I... w-was g-g-going t-t-to t-tell y-y-you, b-b-but y-y-you in-in-inter-inter-interrupted m-m-me!... He st-st-stopped at... at... at... th-th-the Co-co-co-



Cocoa!... Cocoa!... What cocoa?... Have you been drinking?...

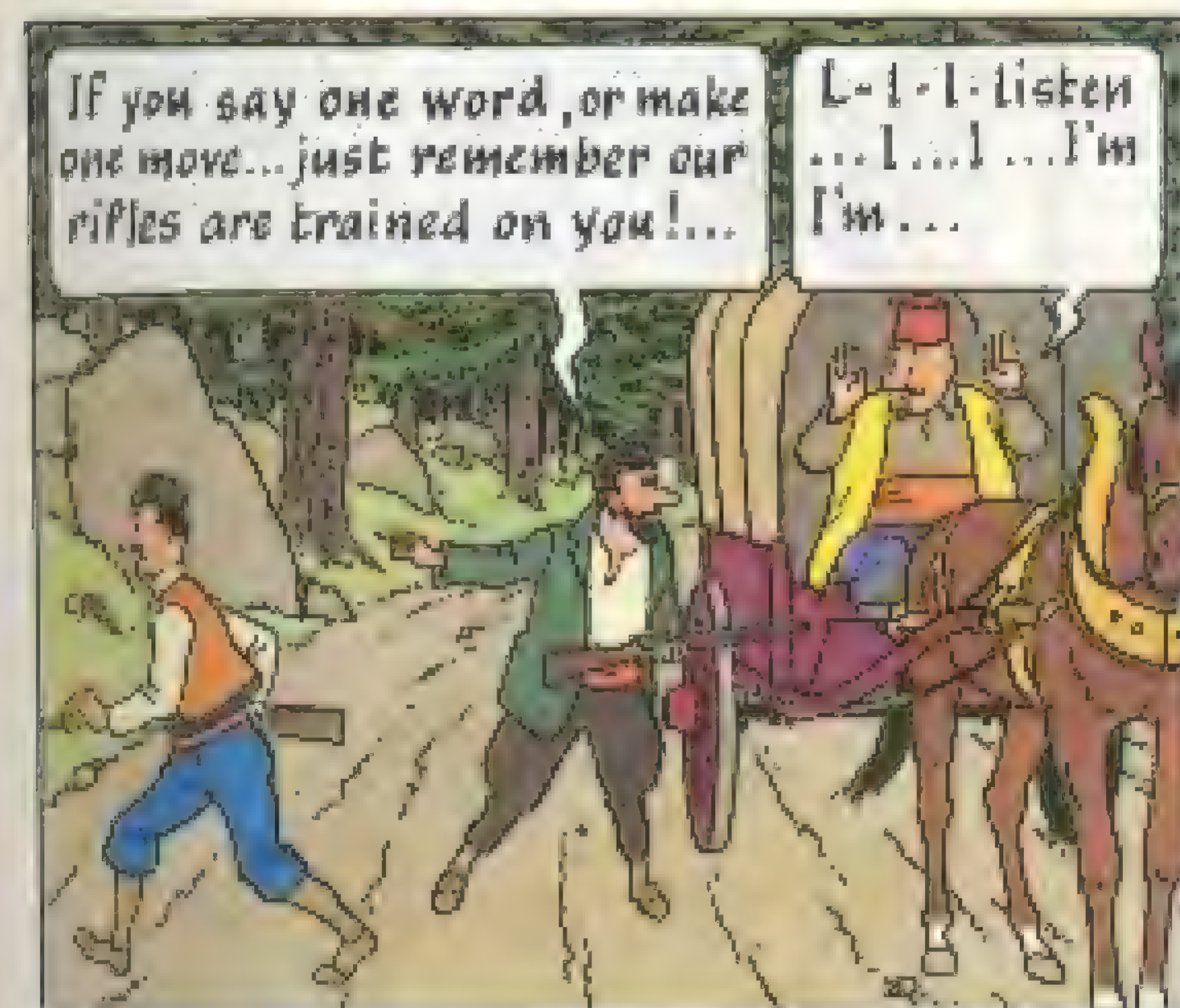
The Co-Co-Coach-Coachman's Rest, an-an-and...

Why didn't you say so sooner? ...



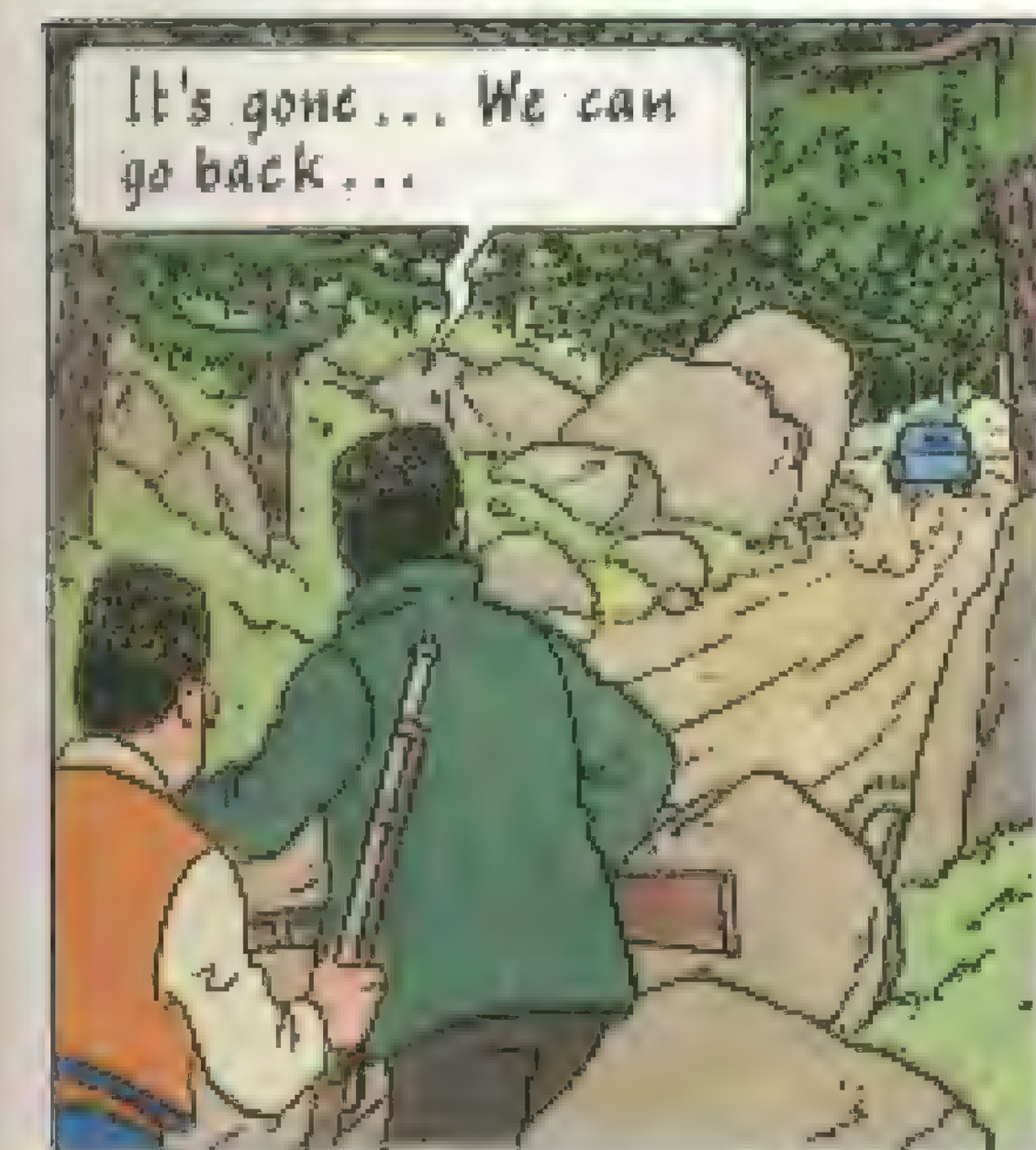
Quiet!... I can hear a car!

An-an-and he... he... g-g-g-



If you say one word, or make one move... just remember our rifles are trained on you!...

L-l-l-listen...I...I...I'm... I'm...

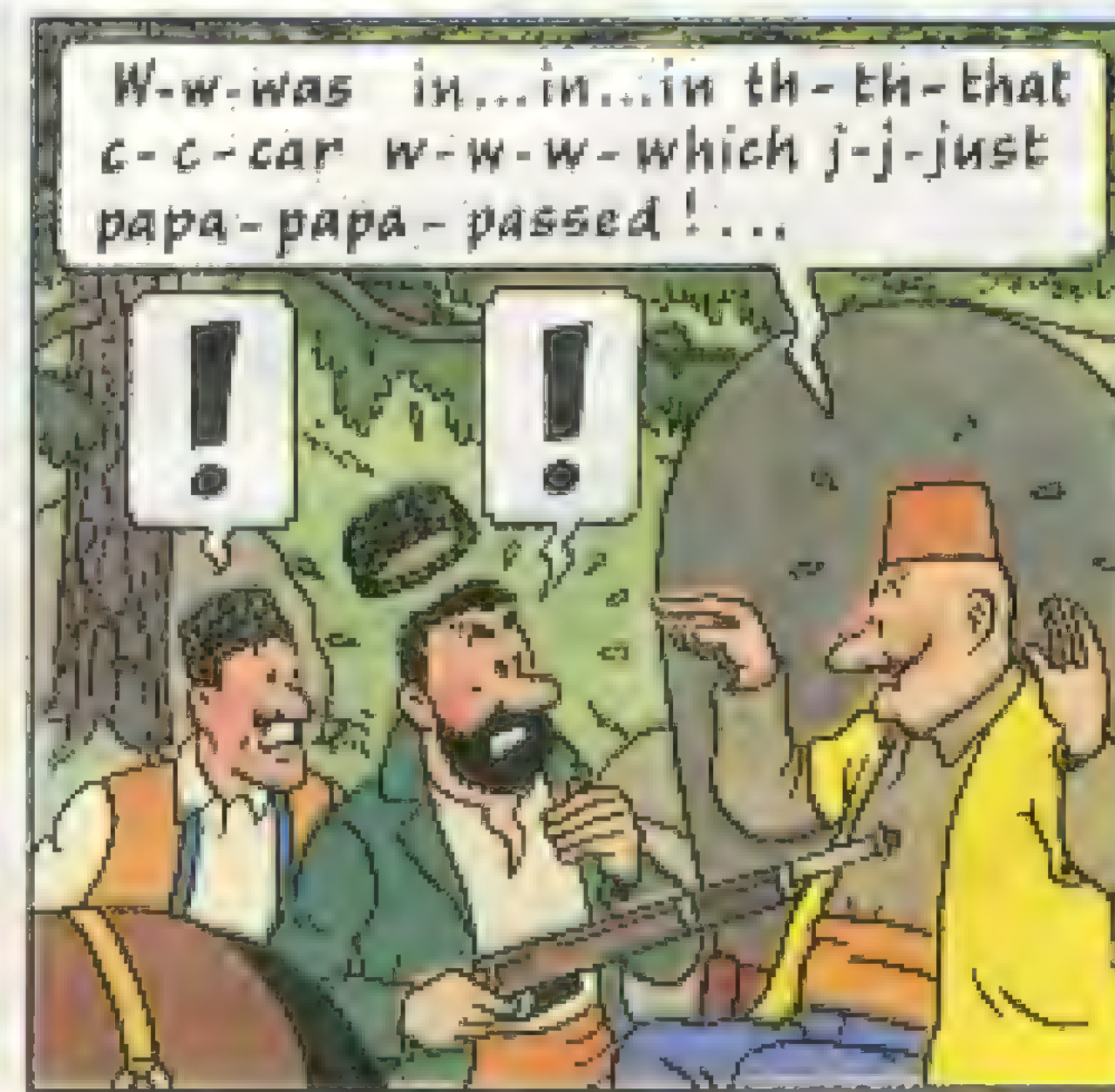


It's gone... We can go back...



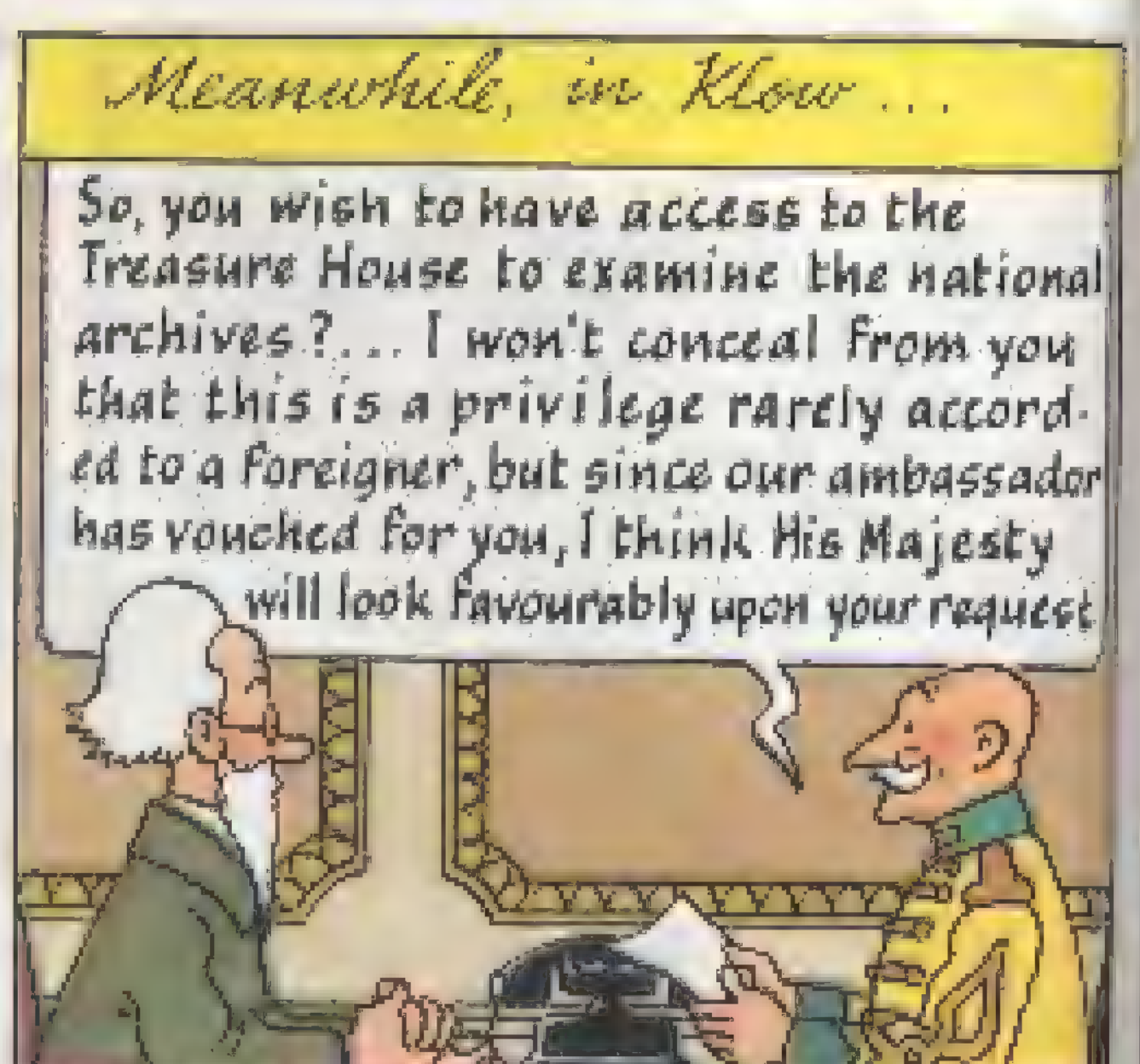
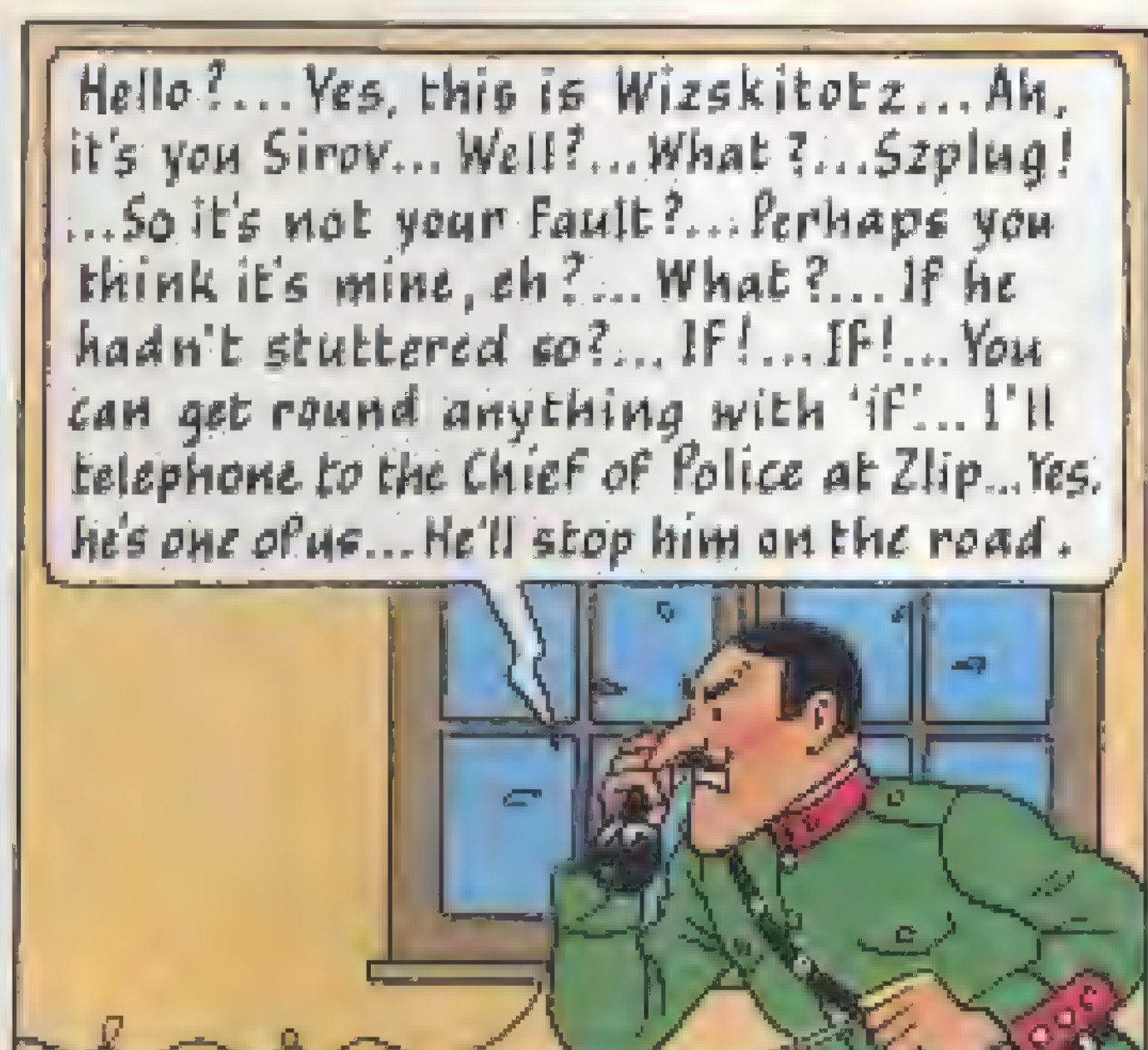
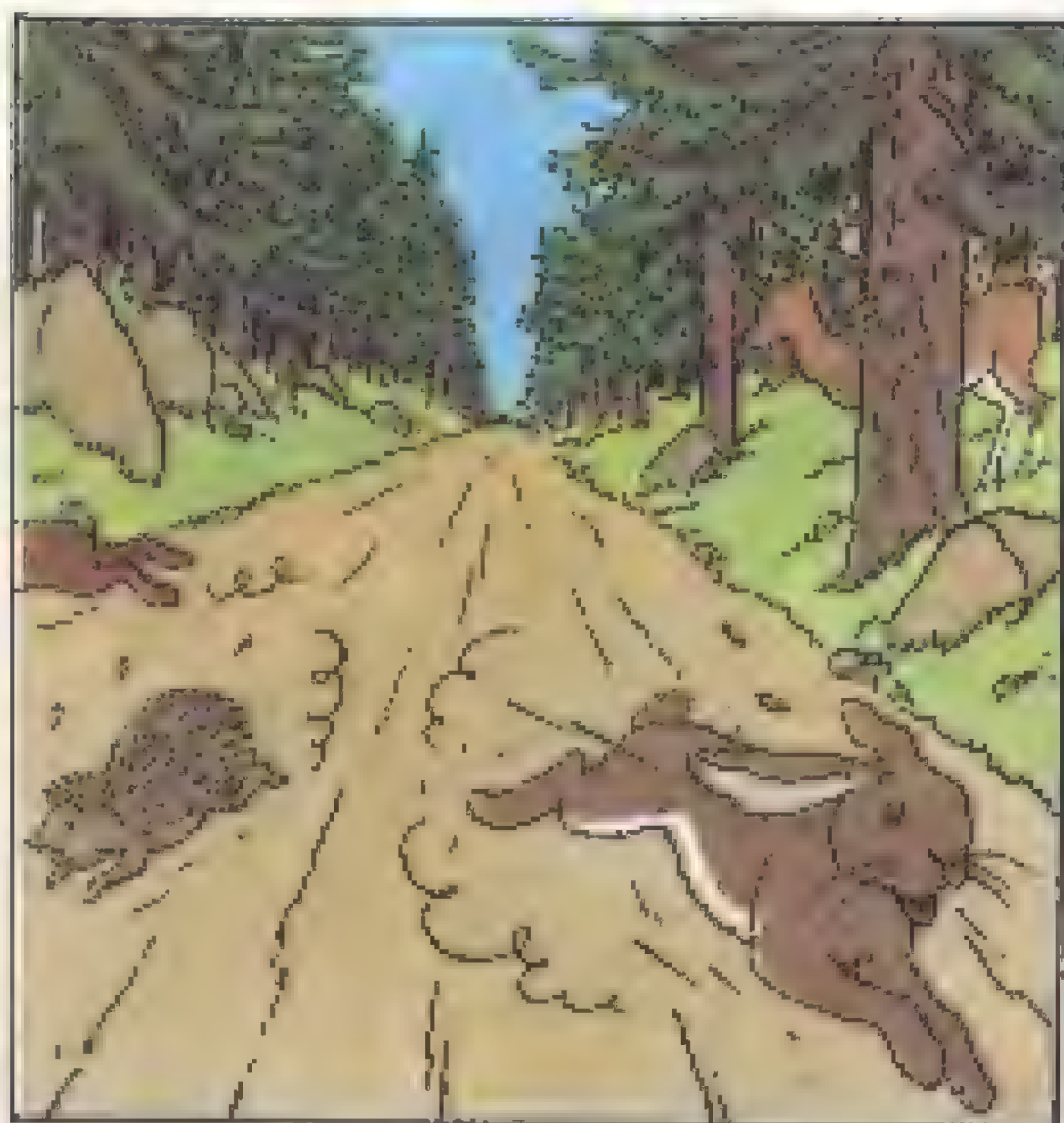
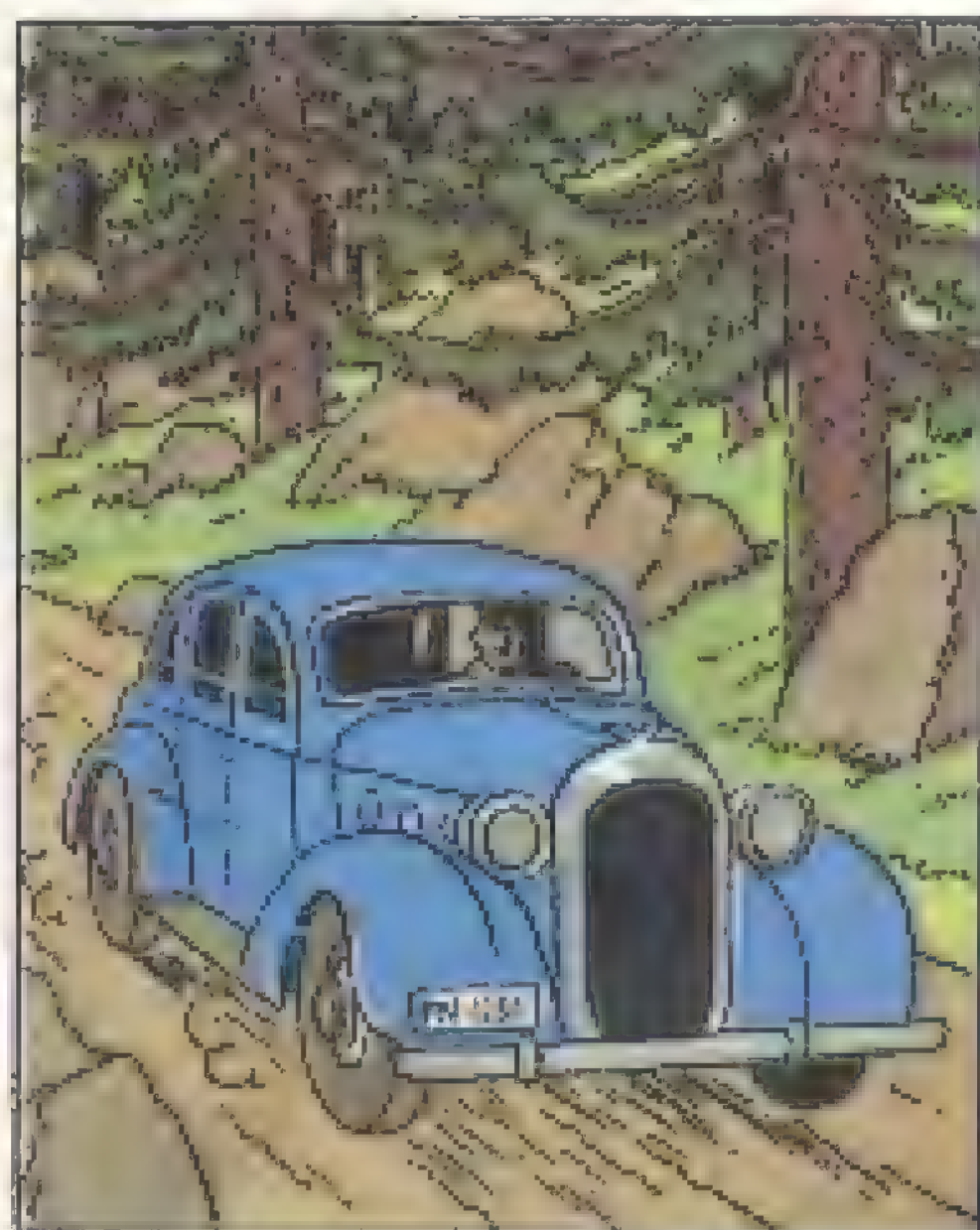
I...I'm t-t-try-trying to t-t-tell... y-y-y-you... th-th-the y-y-young f-f-for-foreigner w-w-

Szplitz on Szplug! Where is he?...



W-w-was in...in...in th-th-that c-c-car w-w-w-which j-j-just papa-papa-passed!...





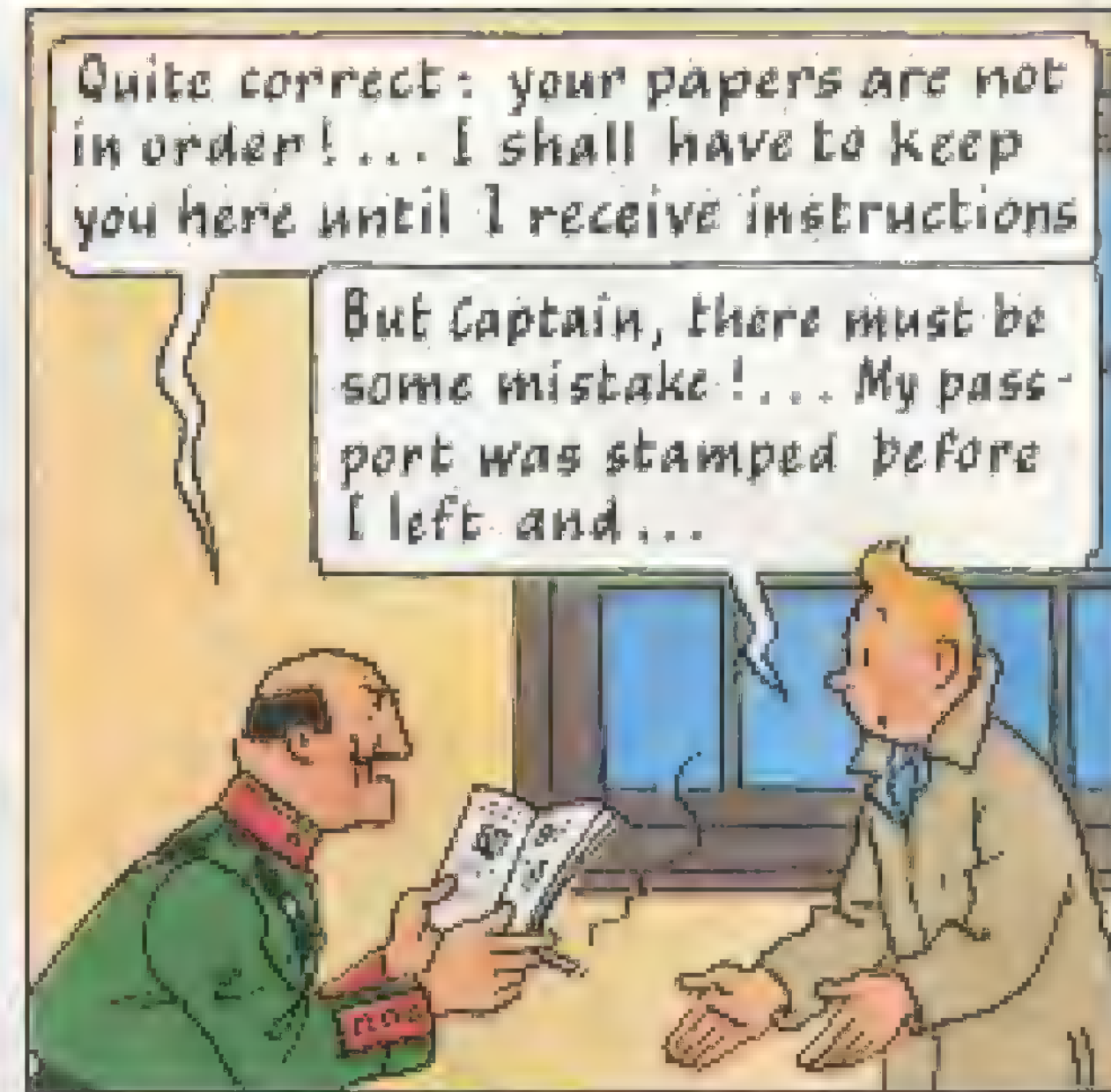




That's him... We'll ask for his papers...



Your papers are not in order! ... Come with us to the police station!



Quite correct: your papers are not in order! ... I shall have to keep you here until I receive instructions

But Captain, there must be some mistake! ... My passport was stamped before I left and...



I am sorry, but I cannot allow you to proceed. Take him away!



Captain! ... You must listen! ... I have something important to tell you! ... I ...



Hello? ... Wizskitotz? ... This is Szplodj ... I've got our fine bird! ... Yes, we simply picked him up ... Now what do you want us to do with him? ... Yes... Yes... He obviously mustn't get to Klow... I'll think it over... That's it, ring up in the morning... Goodbye...



While I cool my heels here, goodness knows what's going on in Klow...



Aaaouaaah! ... It's getting dark... I'd better try and get some sleep, as there's nothing else to do...



This is Radio Klow... We are now broadcasting a concert from the Winter Garden at Klow. The soloist is Signora Bianca Casta Fiore of La Scala, Milan.



Ah, my beauty ♪ past compare; these jewels bright I wear! ♪ Was I ever Margarita?



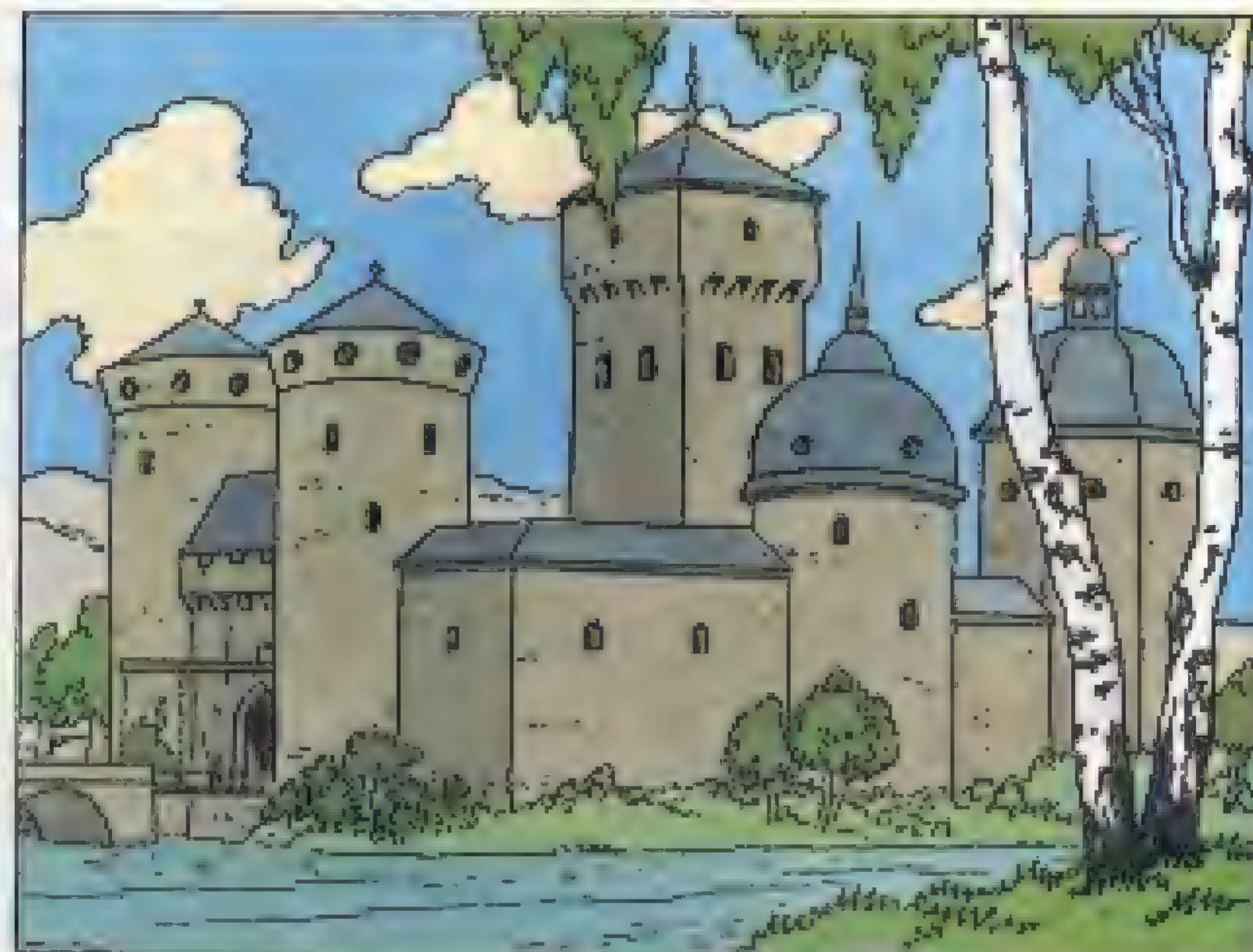
Is it I? ♪ Come reply! ♪ Mirror, mirror tell me truly! ♪



Next day...

This document bearing the royal signature will admit you to the Treasure Chamber. Lieutenant Kromir will escort you there...

The regalia is housed in the keep of Kropow Castle. A special guard is mounted over it.



In the name of the King!

Professor, please come with me.

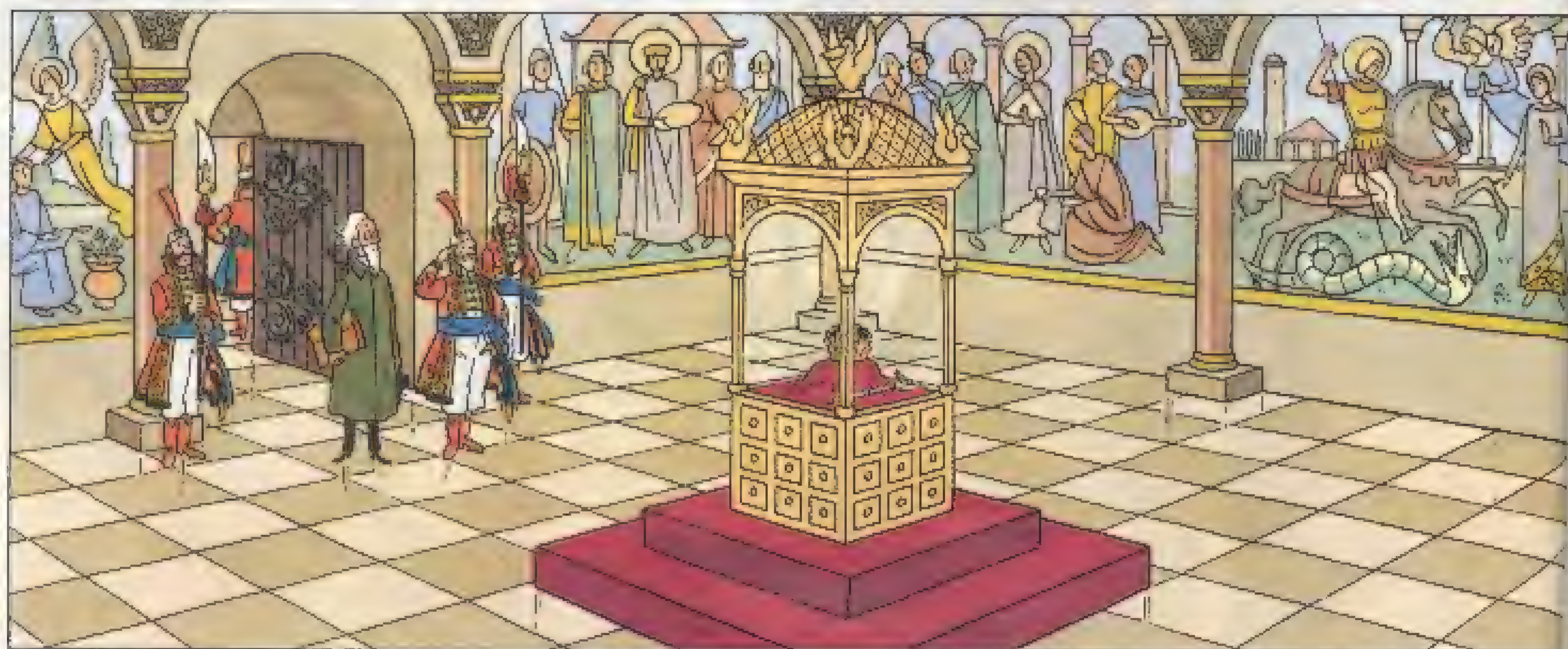


The regalia seems well guarded!

It is! The man who is clever enough to steal it hasn't been born!



There is His Majesty's regalia, Professor!...





And this is the Muniments Room, which adjoins the Treasure Chamber. You must forgive me, but two guards will remain with you for as long as you are here. The doors will also be locked from the outside. Those are the orders, I hope you will not be offended.

Not in the least...



Meanwhile...

You are to take this young man to Klow. But be careful!... He is a dangerous ruffian who has been meddling in State secrets... In fact, I've been given to understand, on high authority, that it'd be a good thing if he never arrived in Klow.



These are your orders... You, as the driver, will stage a breakdown. You will get out to look at the engine, and the others will follow... The prisoner will then try to escape and... You understand me?

Yes, sir!... But what if he doesn't try to get away?



Don't worry!... He will!...

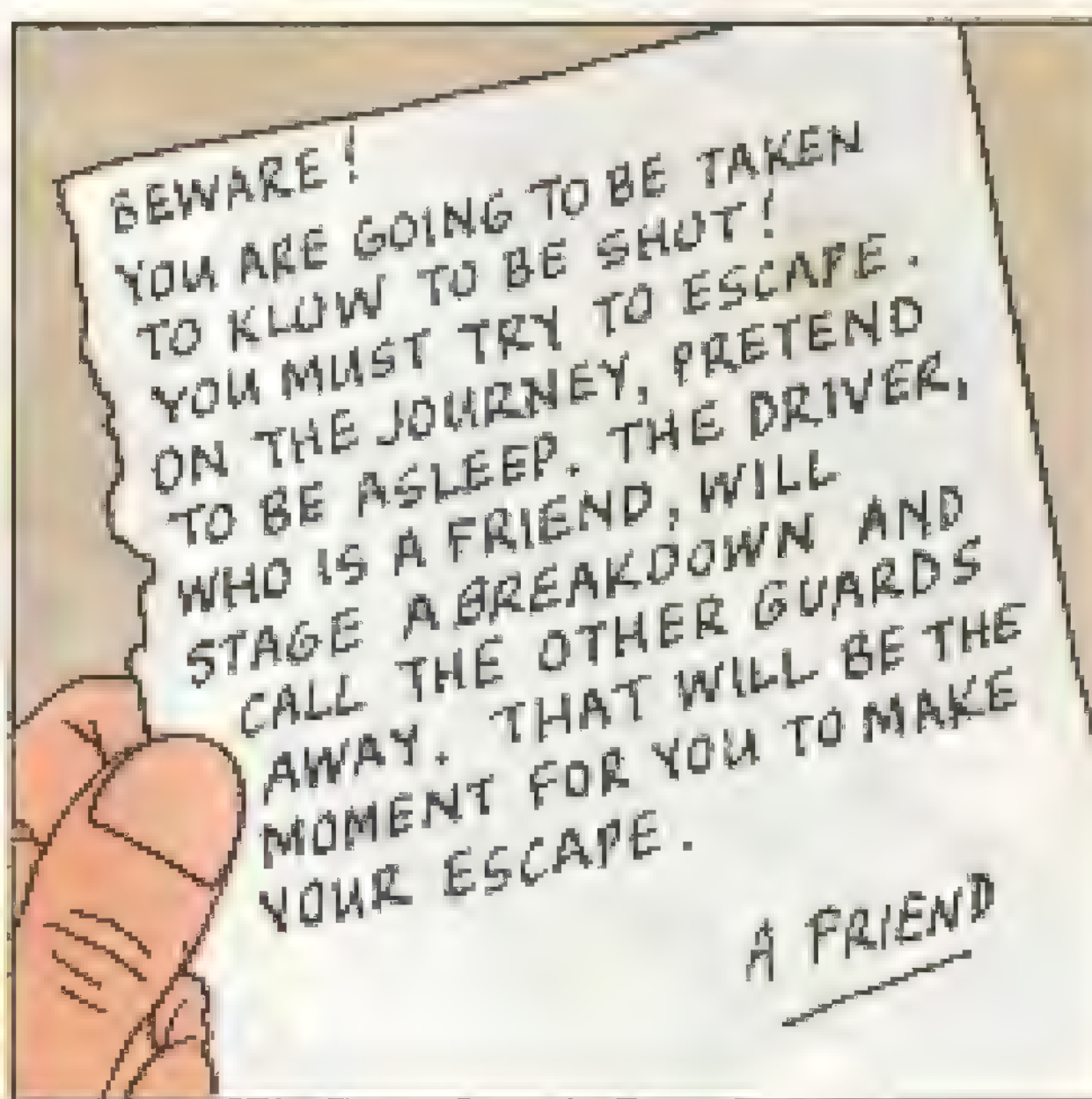


I wonder who can have sent me this?... A friend?... What friend?...



BEWARE!  
YOU ARE GOING TO BE TAKEN TO KLOW TO BE SHOT!  
YOU MUST TRY TO ESCAPE.  
ON THE JOURNEY, PRETEND TO BE ASLEEP. THE DRIVER, WHO IS A FRIEND, WILL STAGE A BREAKDOWN AND CALL THE OTHER GUARDS AWAY. THAT WILL BE THE MOMENT FOR YOU TO MAKE YOUR ESCAPE.

A FRIEND



We'd better get rid of this, in case I'm searched.

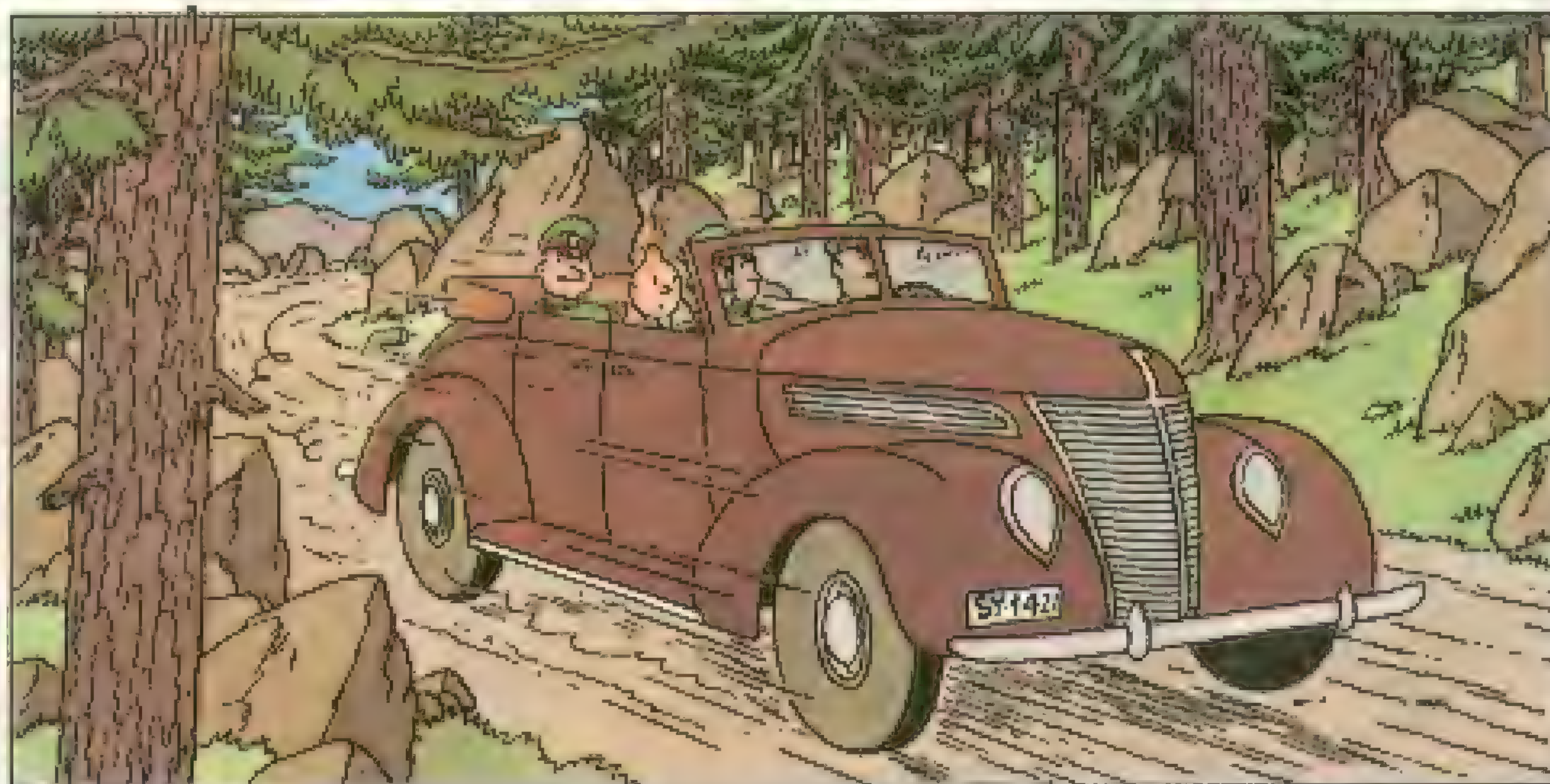


Here, Snowy, swallow this paper pellet for me...



Hurry up now, Snowy, I think someone is coming for us...

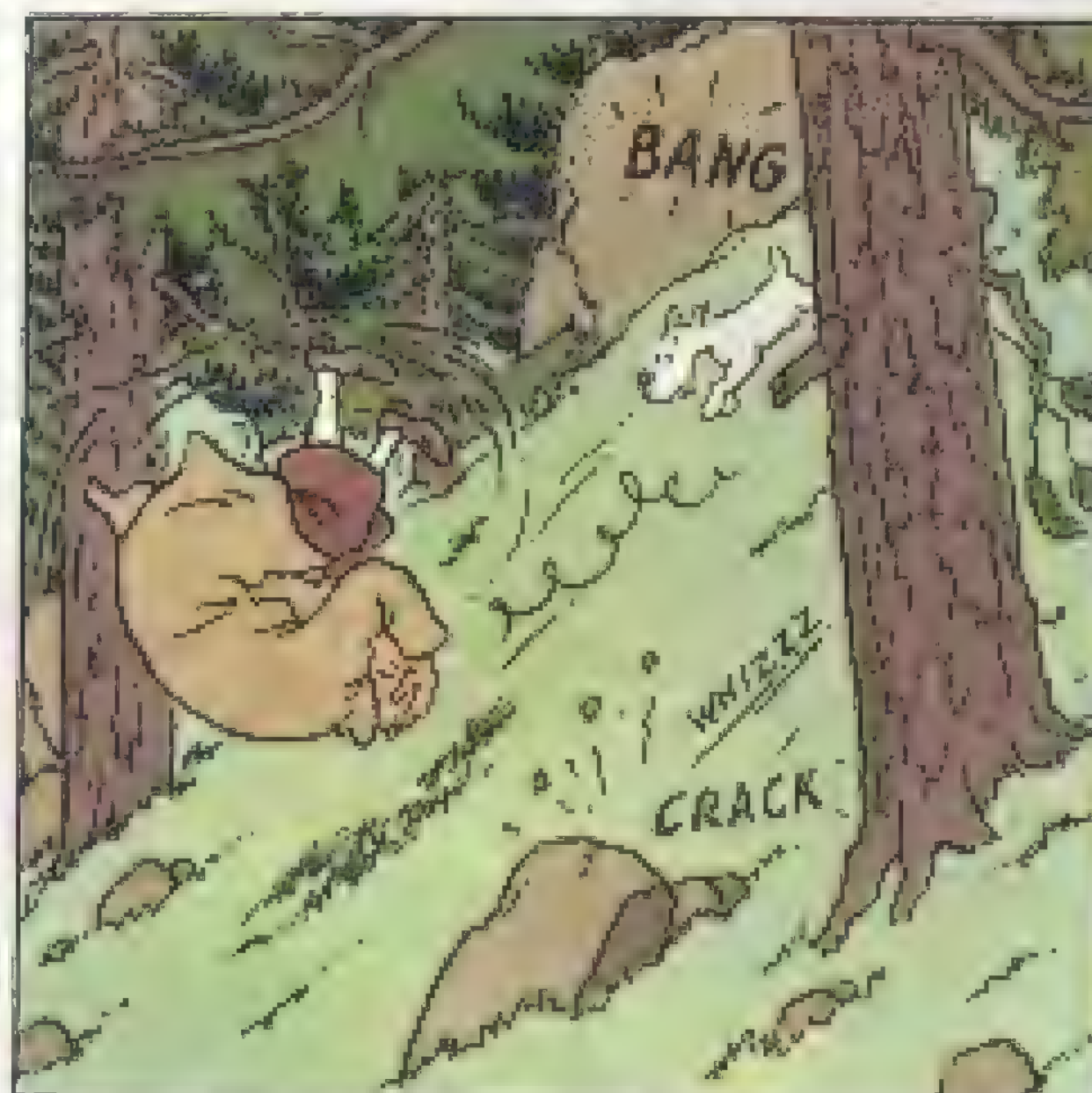
I suppose you think it's easy?







There he goes! ... Don't miss! ...







He fell down there ... Somewhere behind those rocks...

They're coming!...



Careful! About here...



Szplug! Where is he? We've simply got to find him... The captain will never forgive us if we let him get away, after he'd planned that trap...



Come on, let's have another look. He can't be far away...



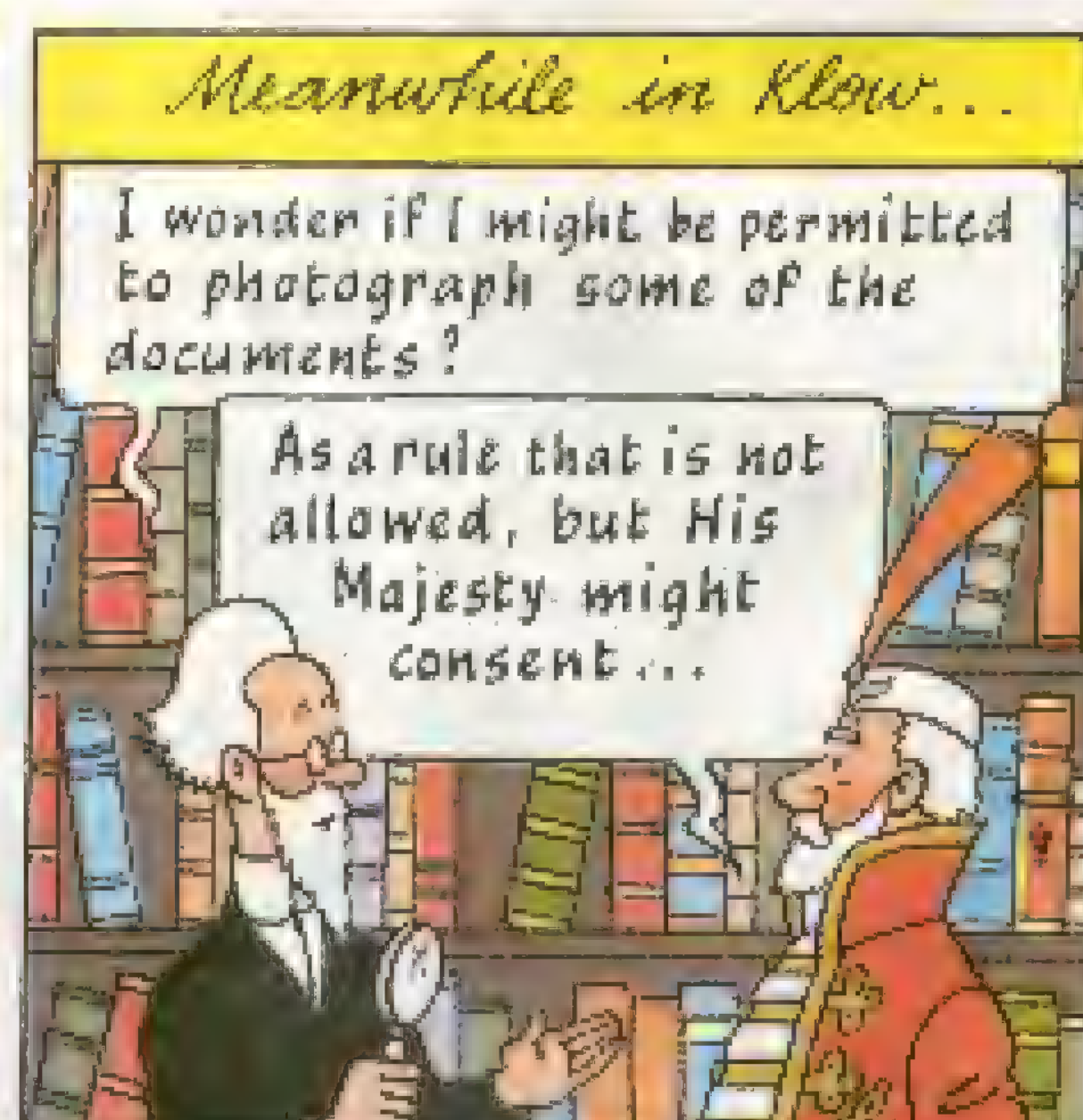
Whew!... They've passed us...



Now, off we go to Klow!...



I must watch my step!... I see that no one can be trusted!... I must warn the King himself.



*Meanwhile in Klow...*

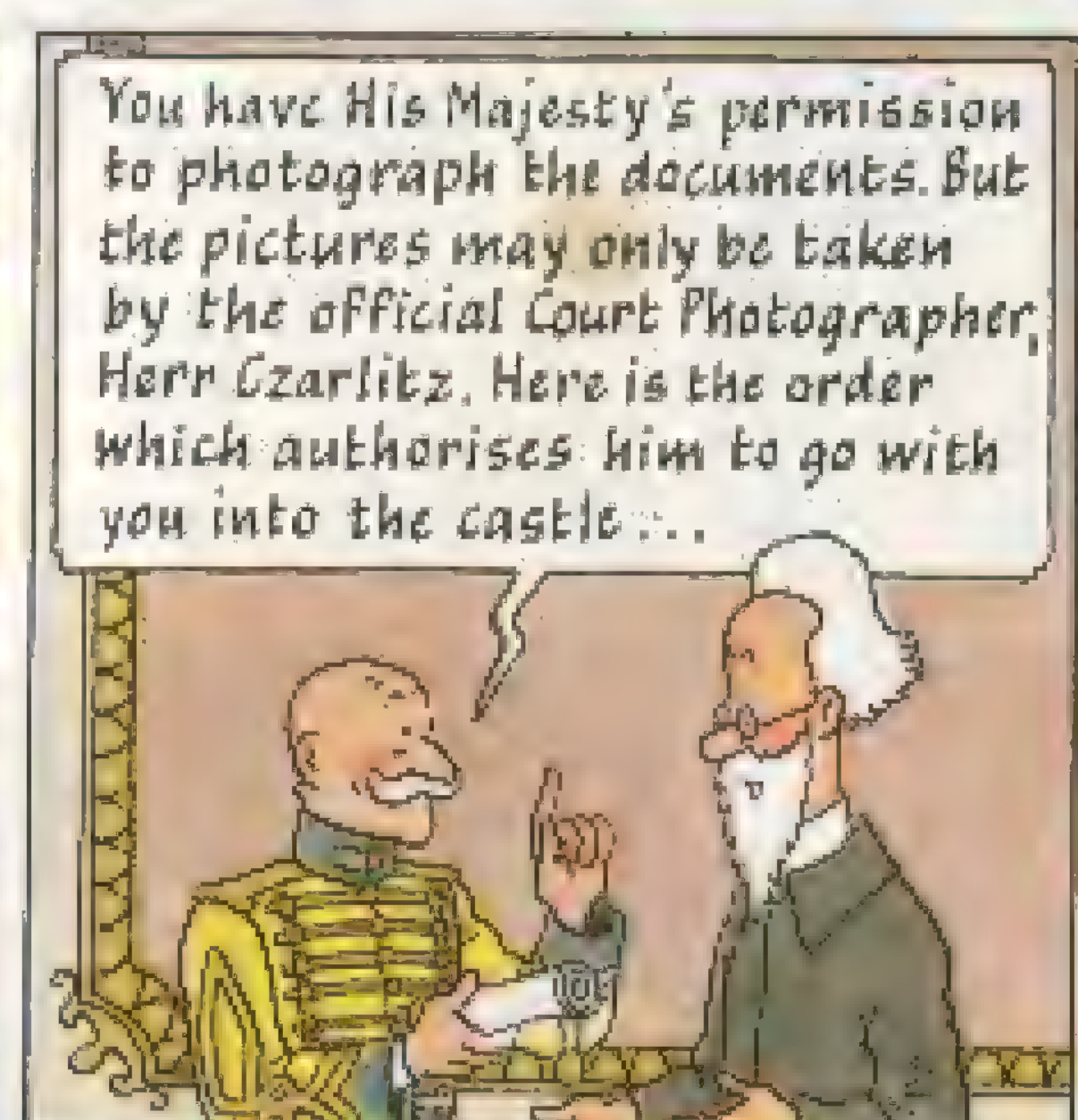
I wonder if I might be permitted to photograph some of the documents?

As a rule that is not allowed, but His Majesty might consent...



Ah! Here's the main road again.

Golly, I'm hungry...



You have His Majesty's permission to photograph the documents. But the pictures may only be taken by the official Court Photographer, Herr Gzarlitz. Here is the order which authorises him to go with you into the castle...



Klow at last!...

When are we going to eat?



Which way to the palace, please?

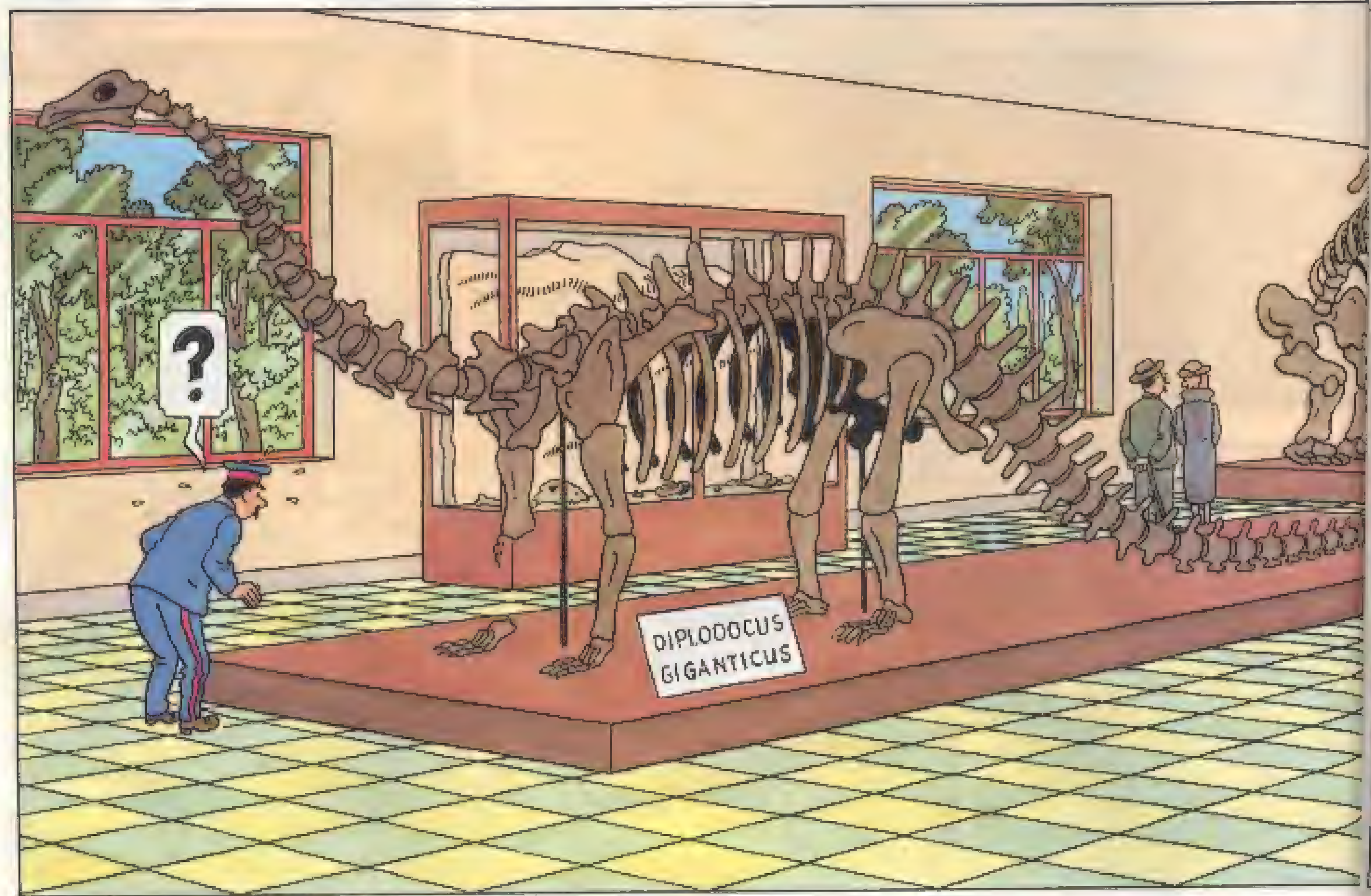
Follow this street to Ottokar Square, then turn left...



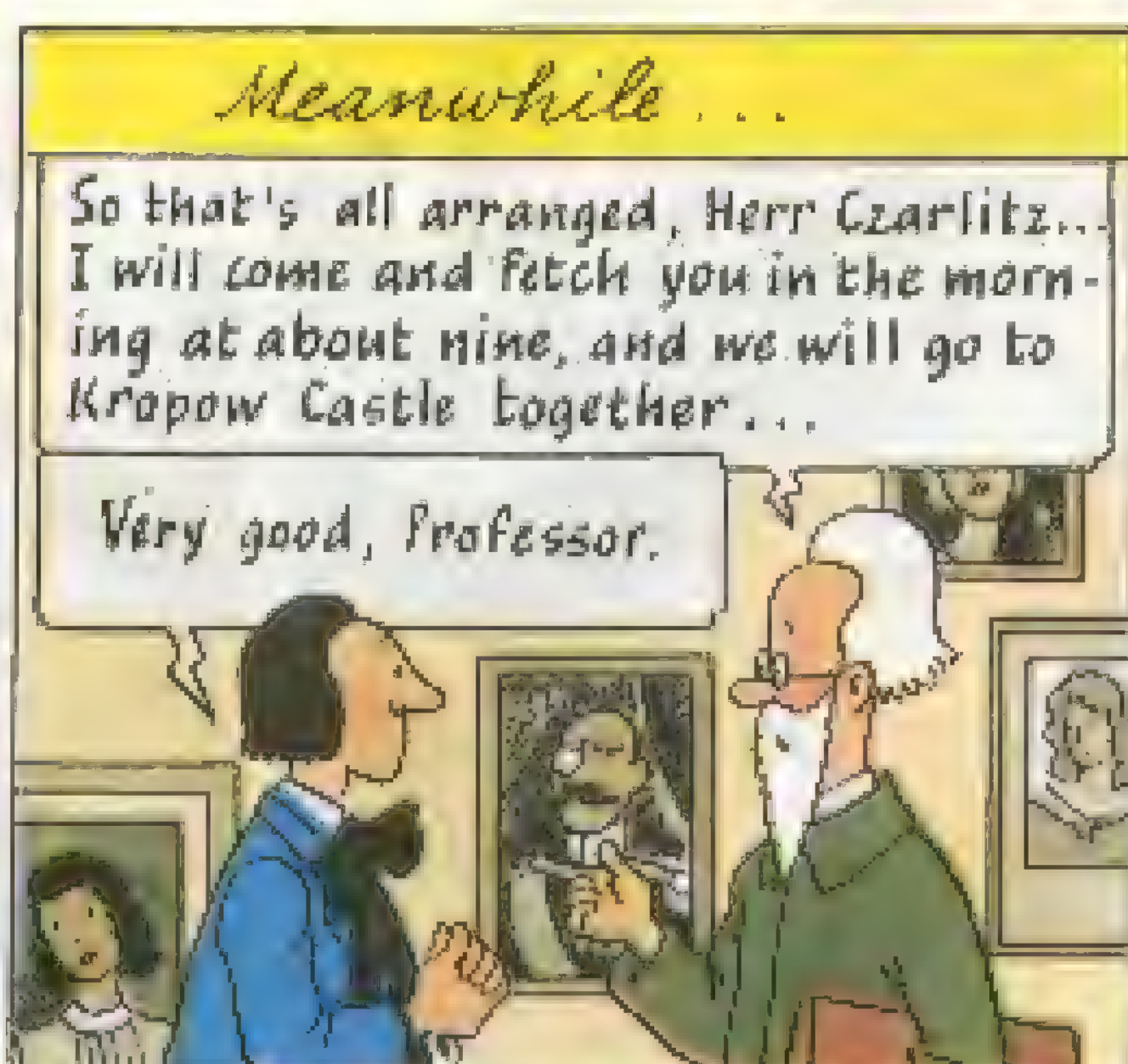
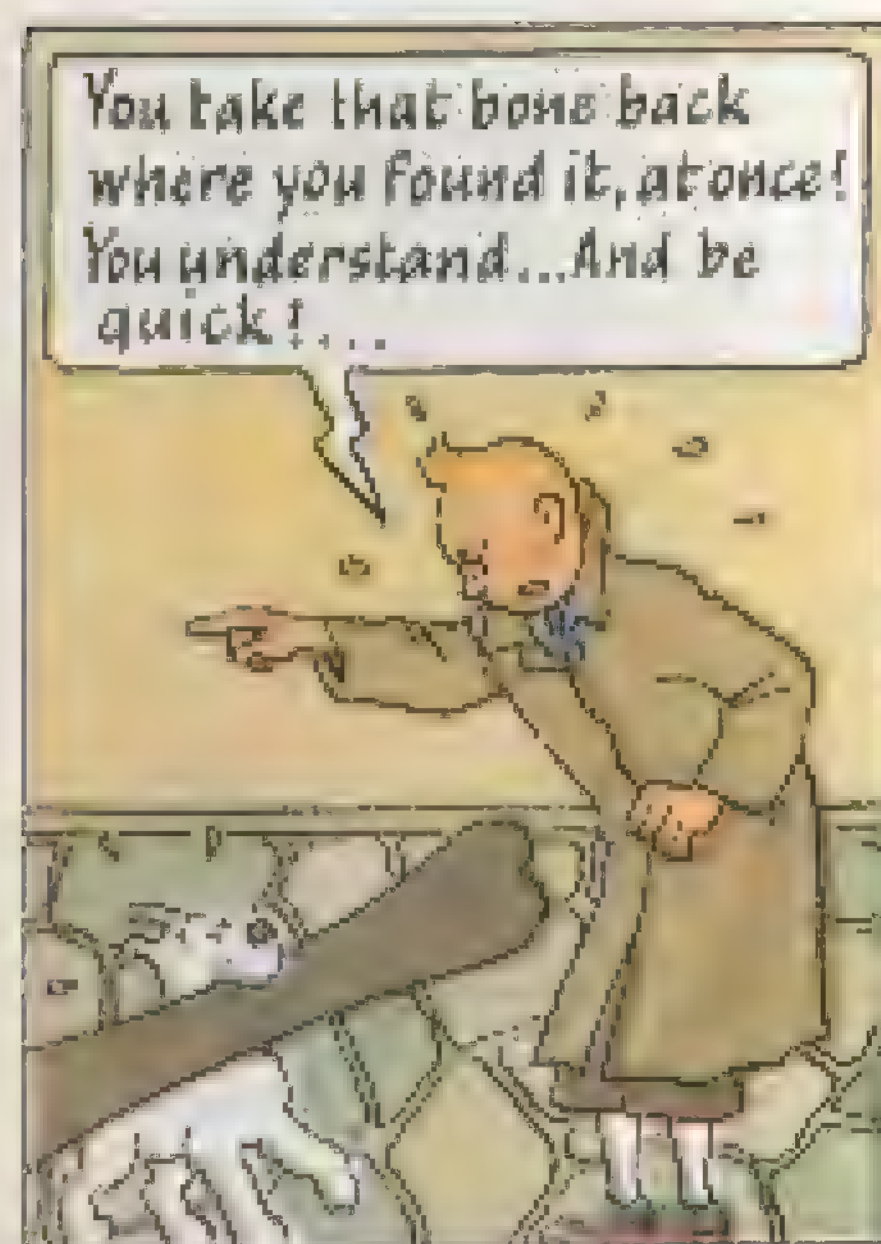
What a downpour! We'll shelter until this is over...

Is this a restaurant?

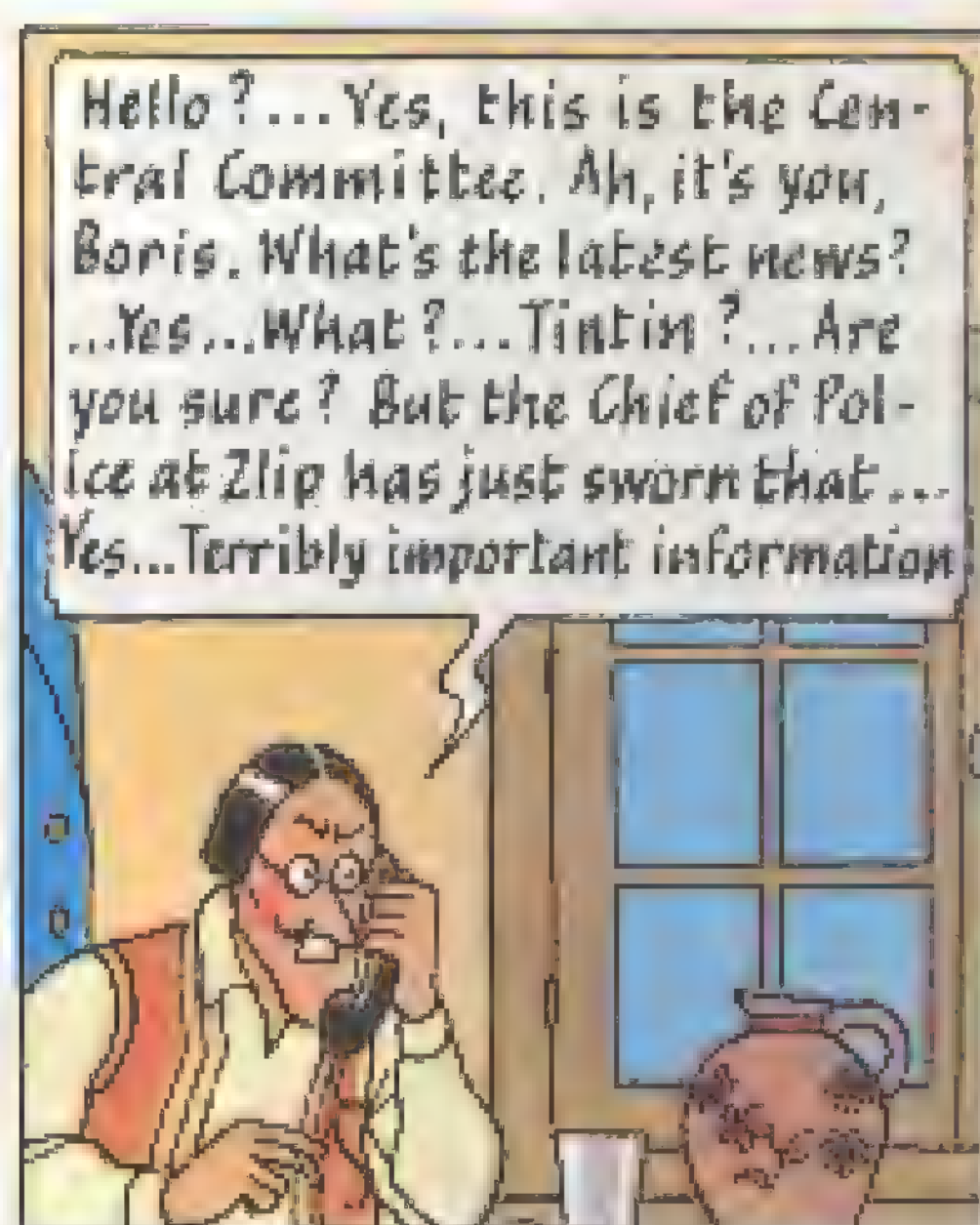
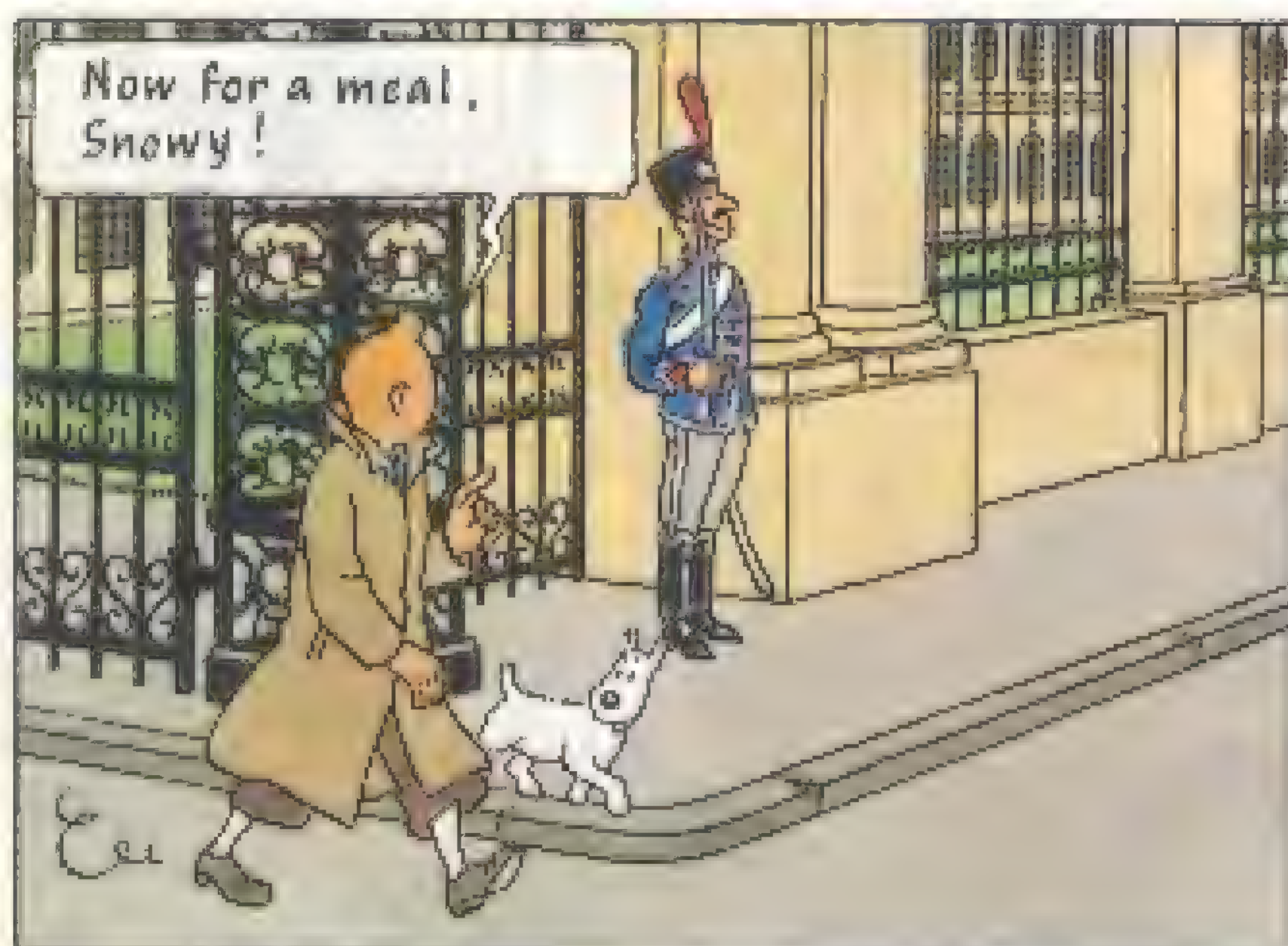




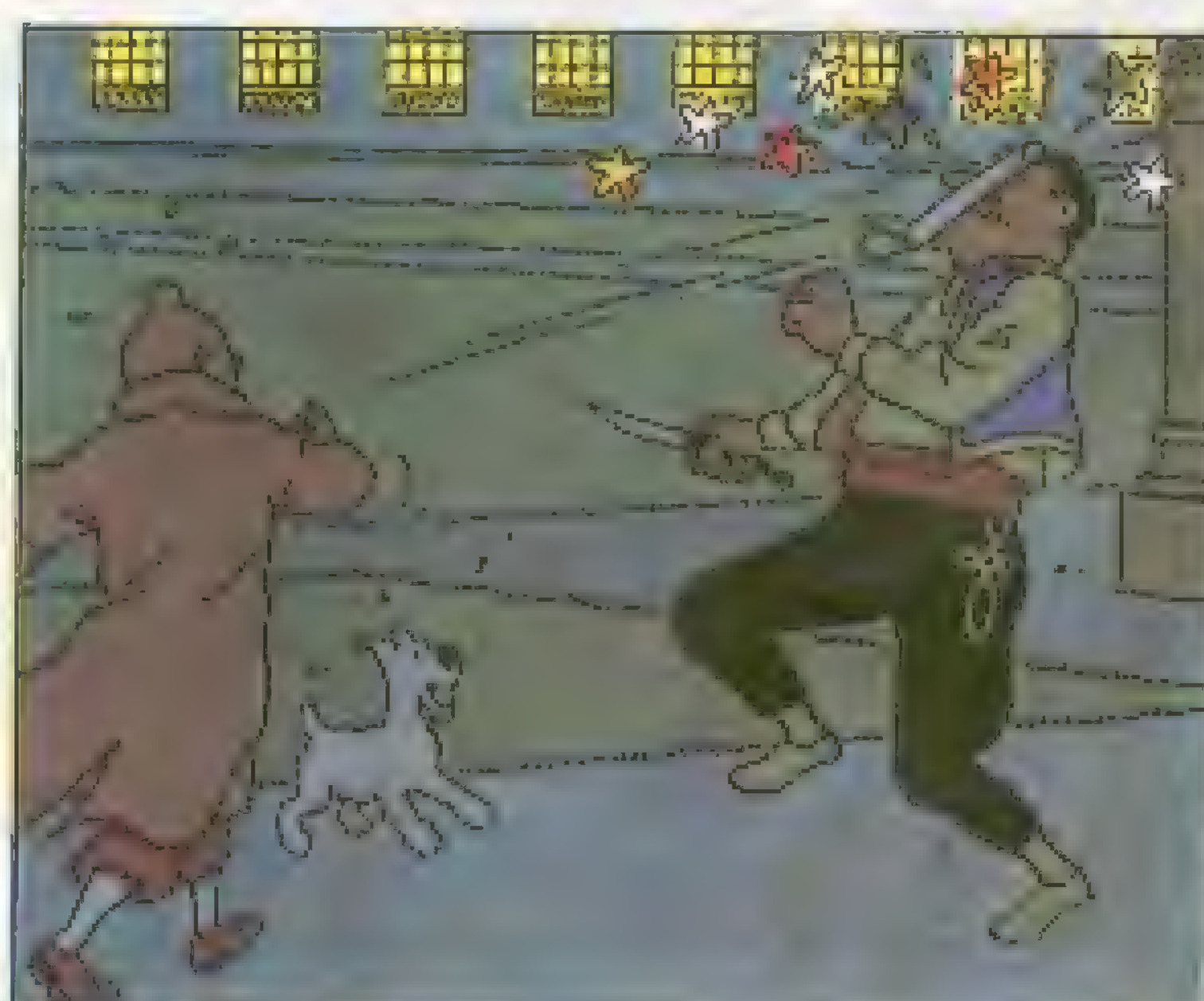




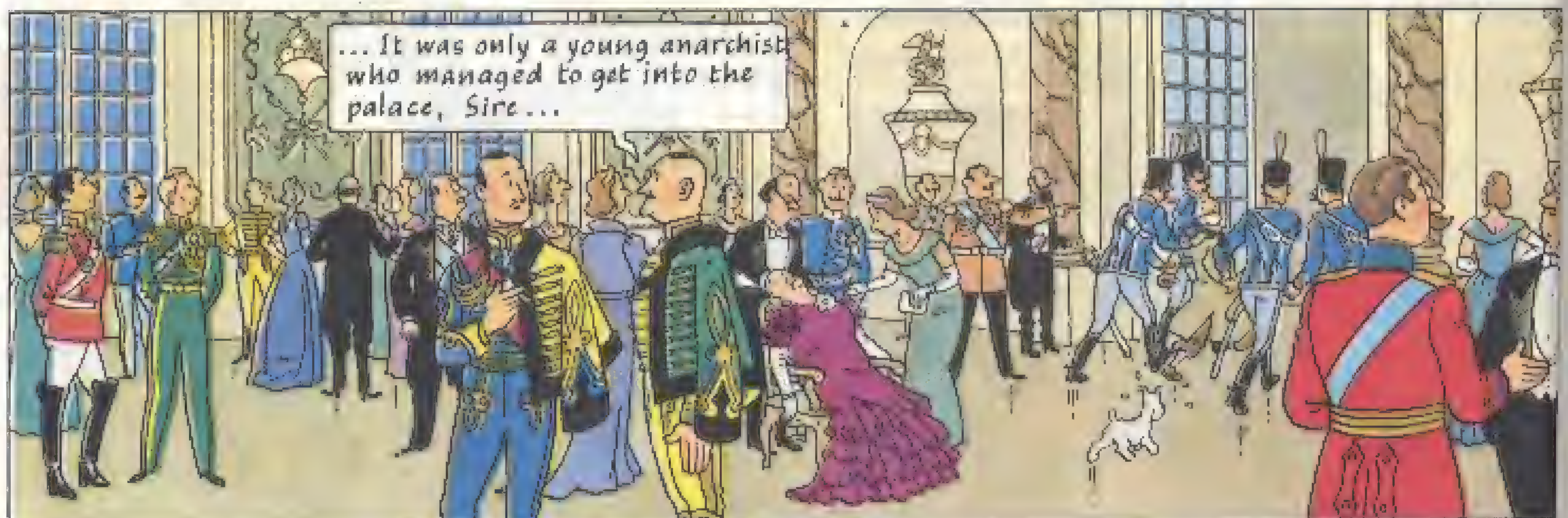
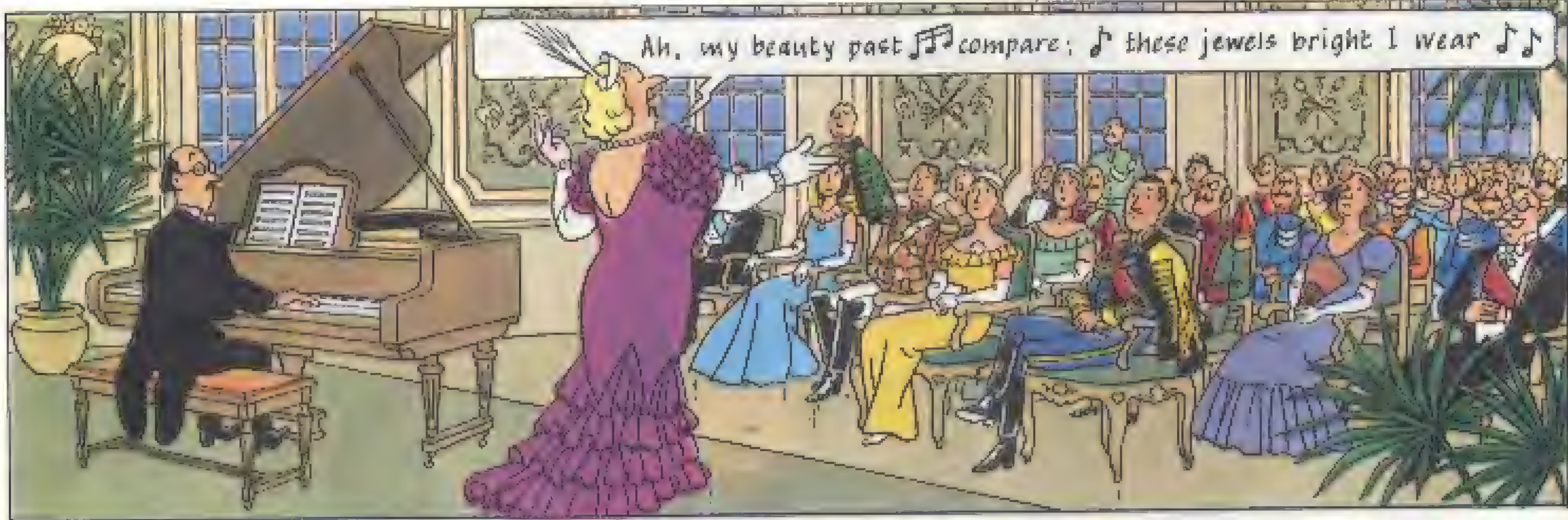












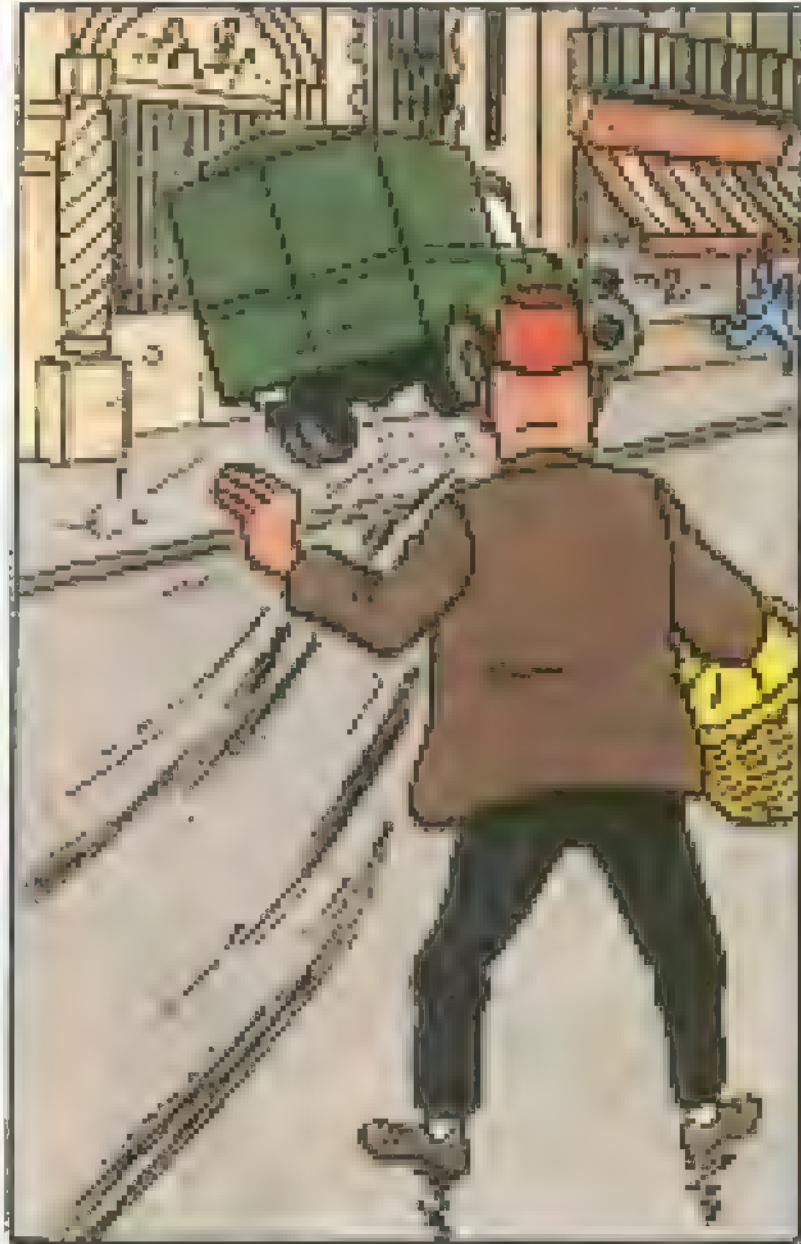
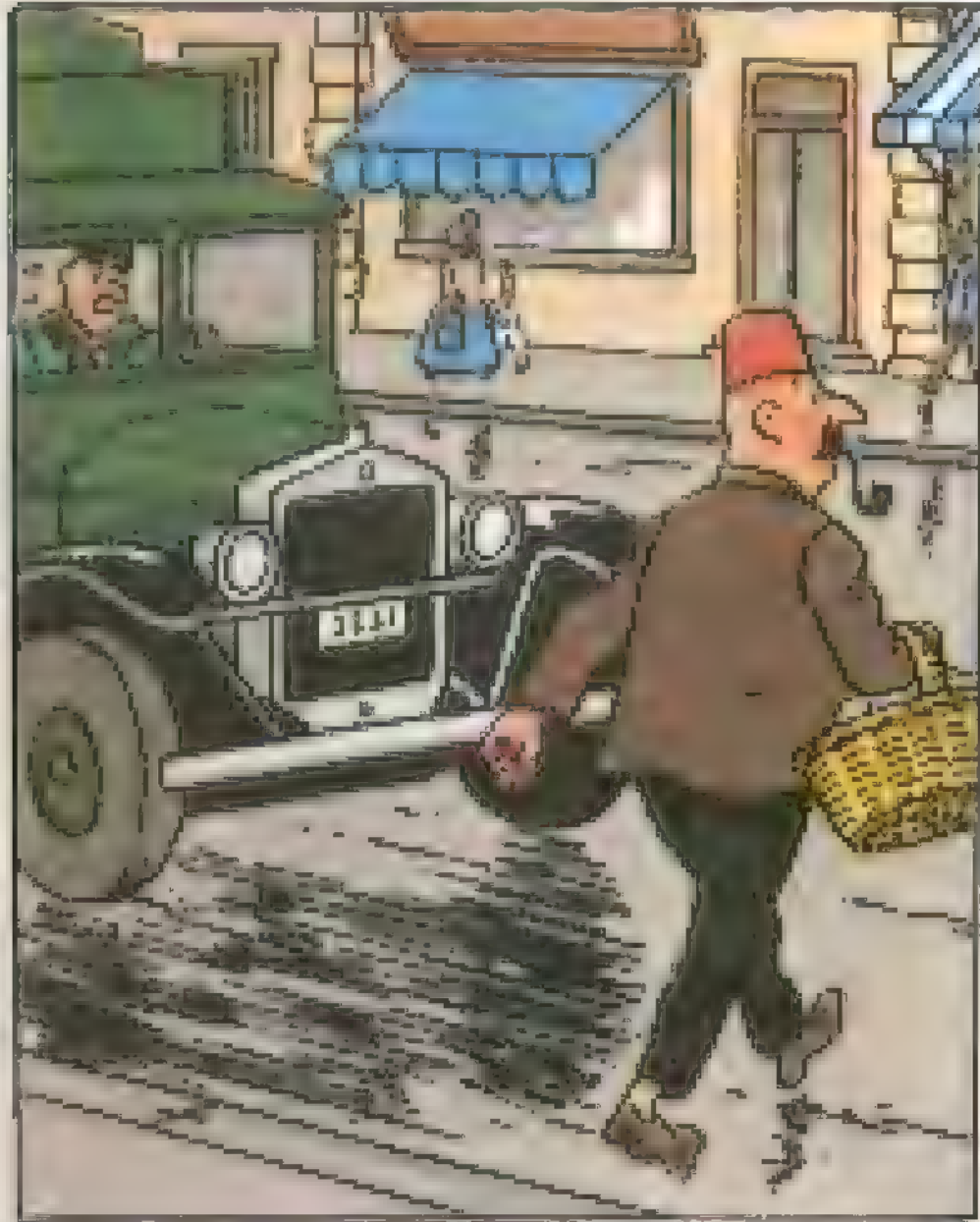
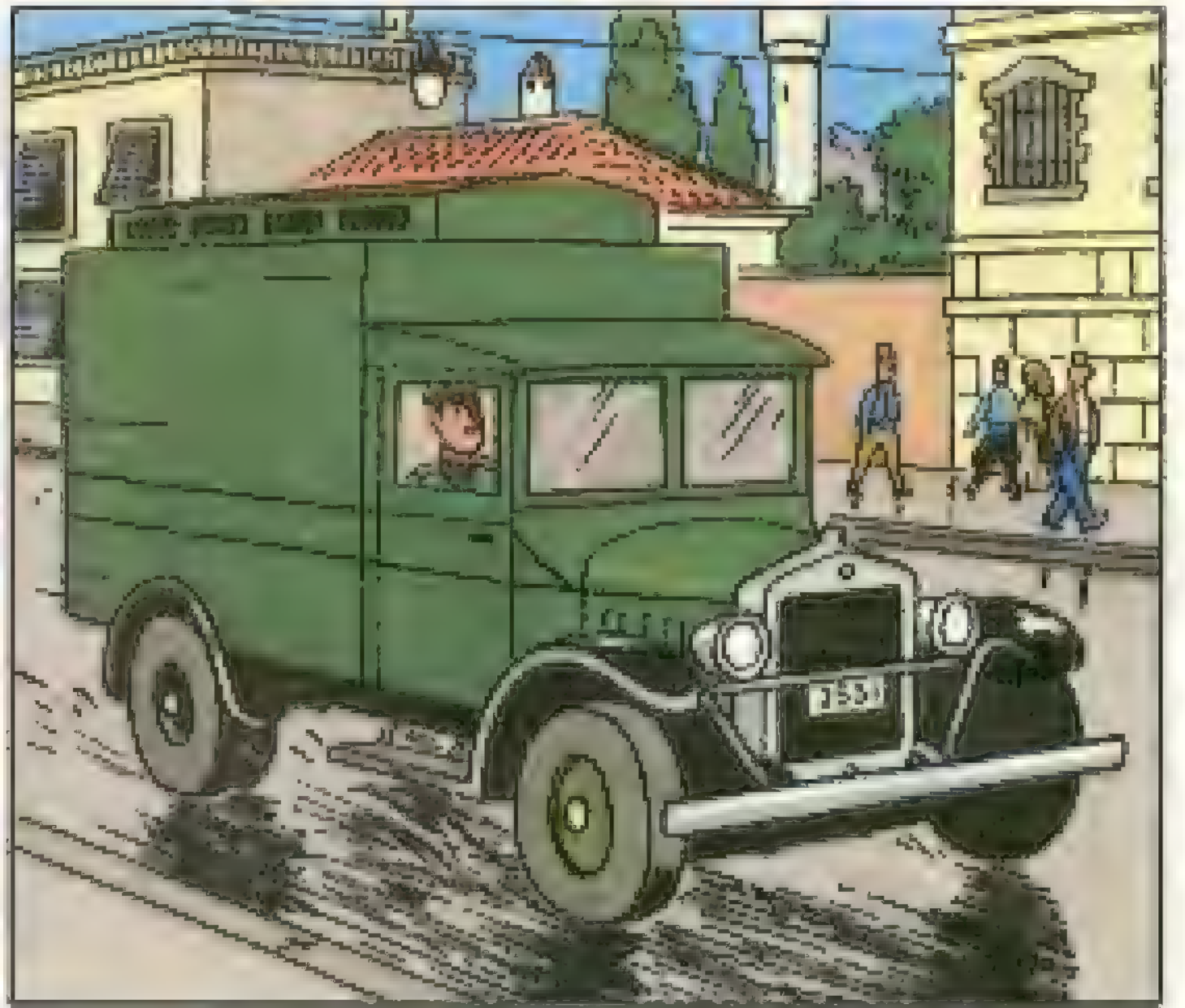


Next morning...

More time wasted!... And I'm sure the conspirators won't be wasting theirs!

CLINK  
CLINK  
CLINK

You are being transferred to the State Prison to await trial. Come with us. The police van is outside...



Hello, this is St. Vladimir's Hospital... An accident?...  
... Casualties? In Moltus Street?  
... All right, I'll send an ambulance



This one still hasn't come round...

Yes, definitely suffering from concussion...

We'd better go back for the others...

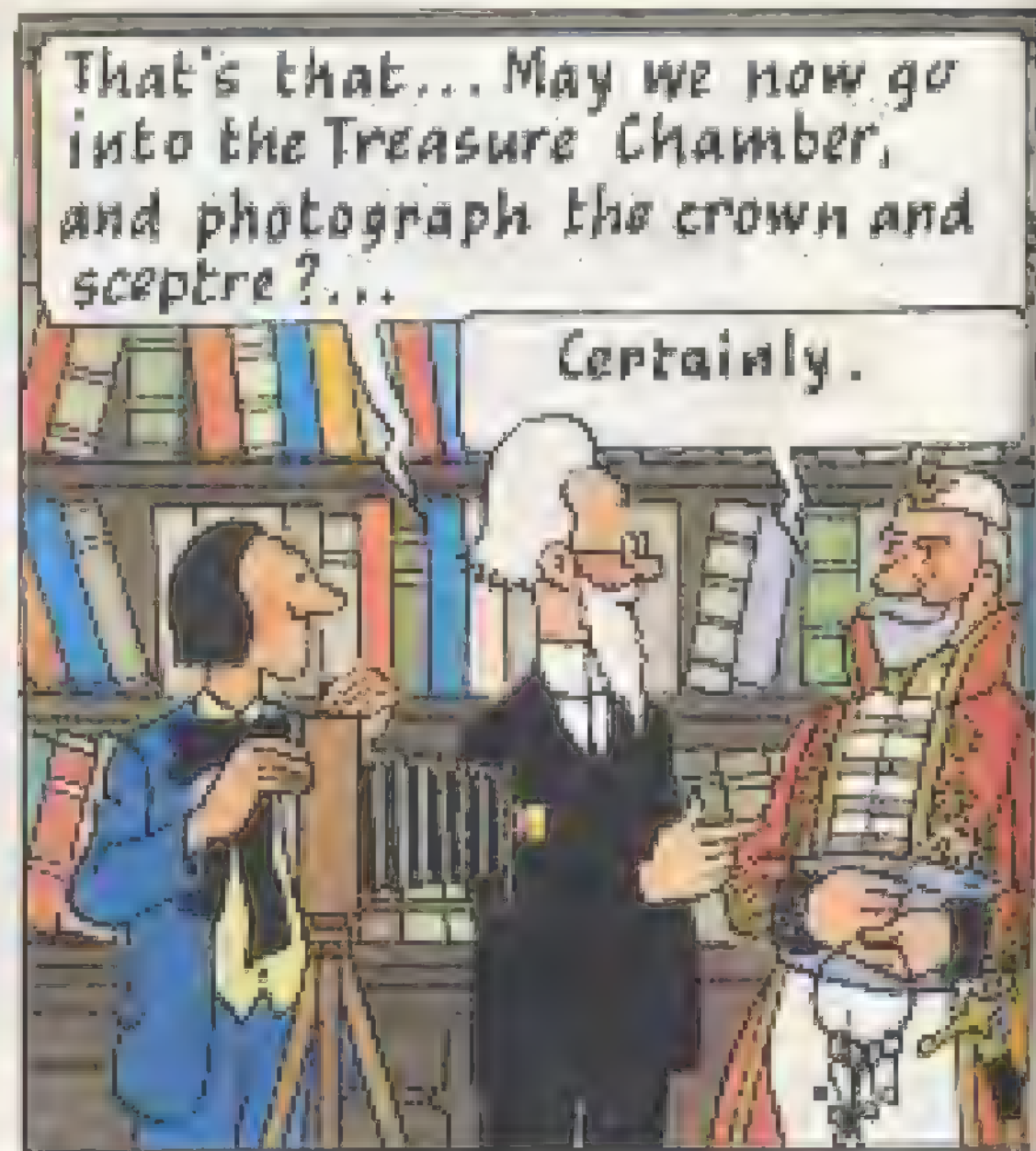
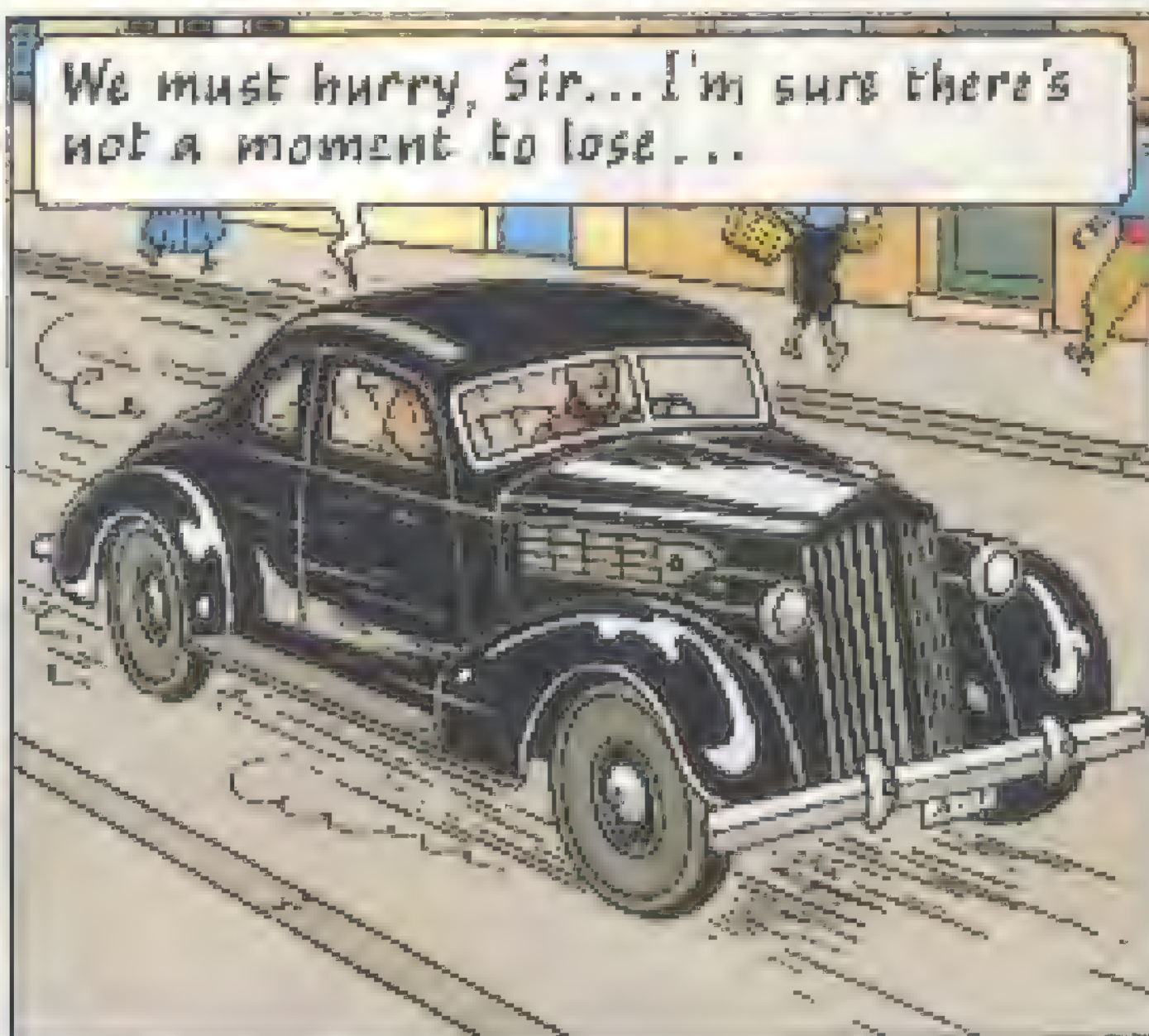
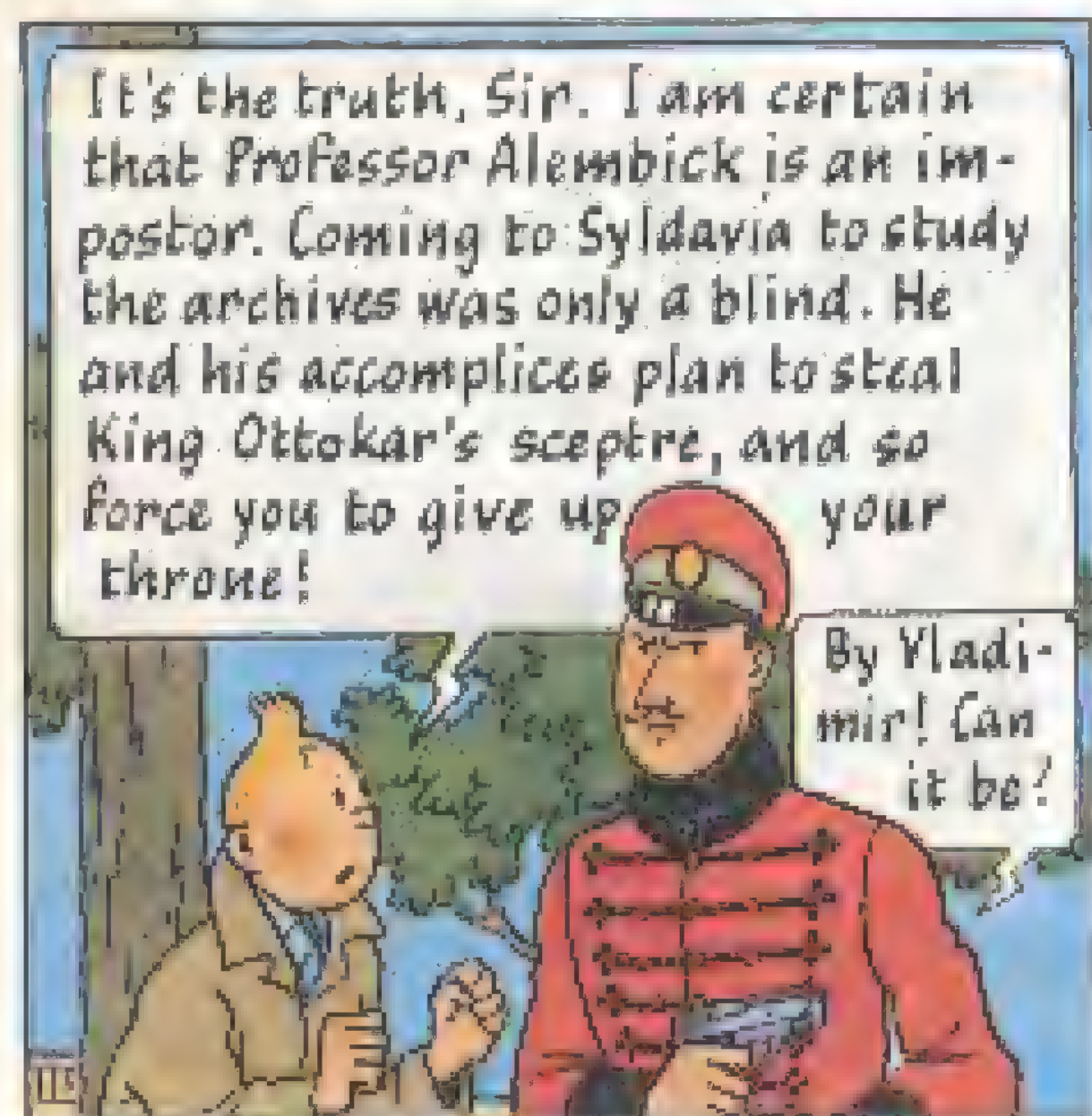
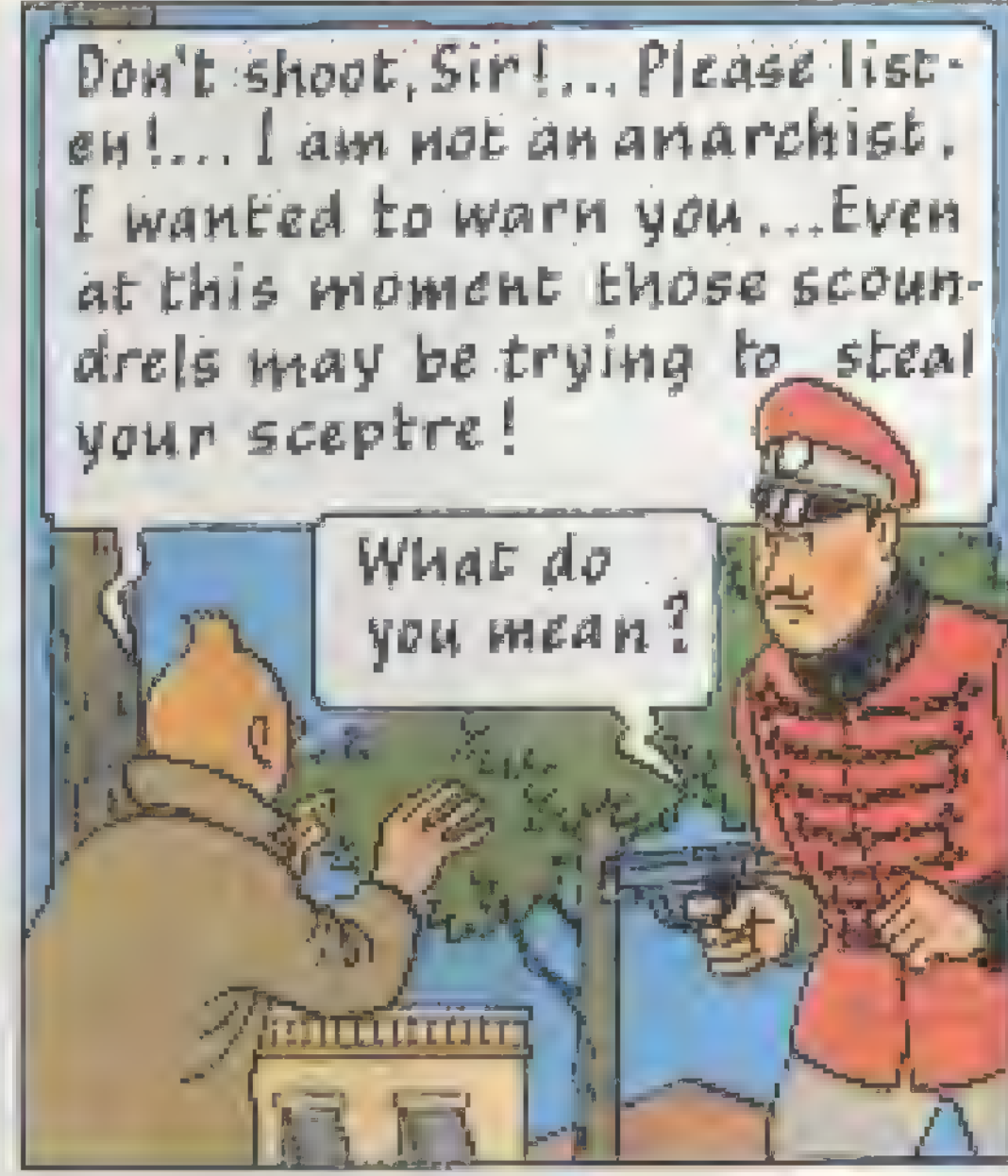
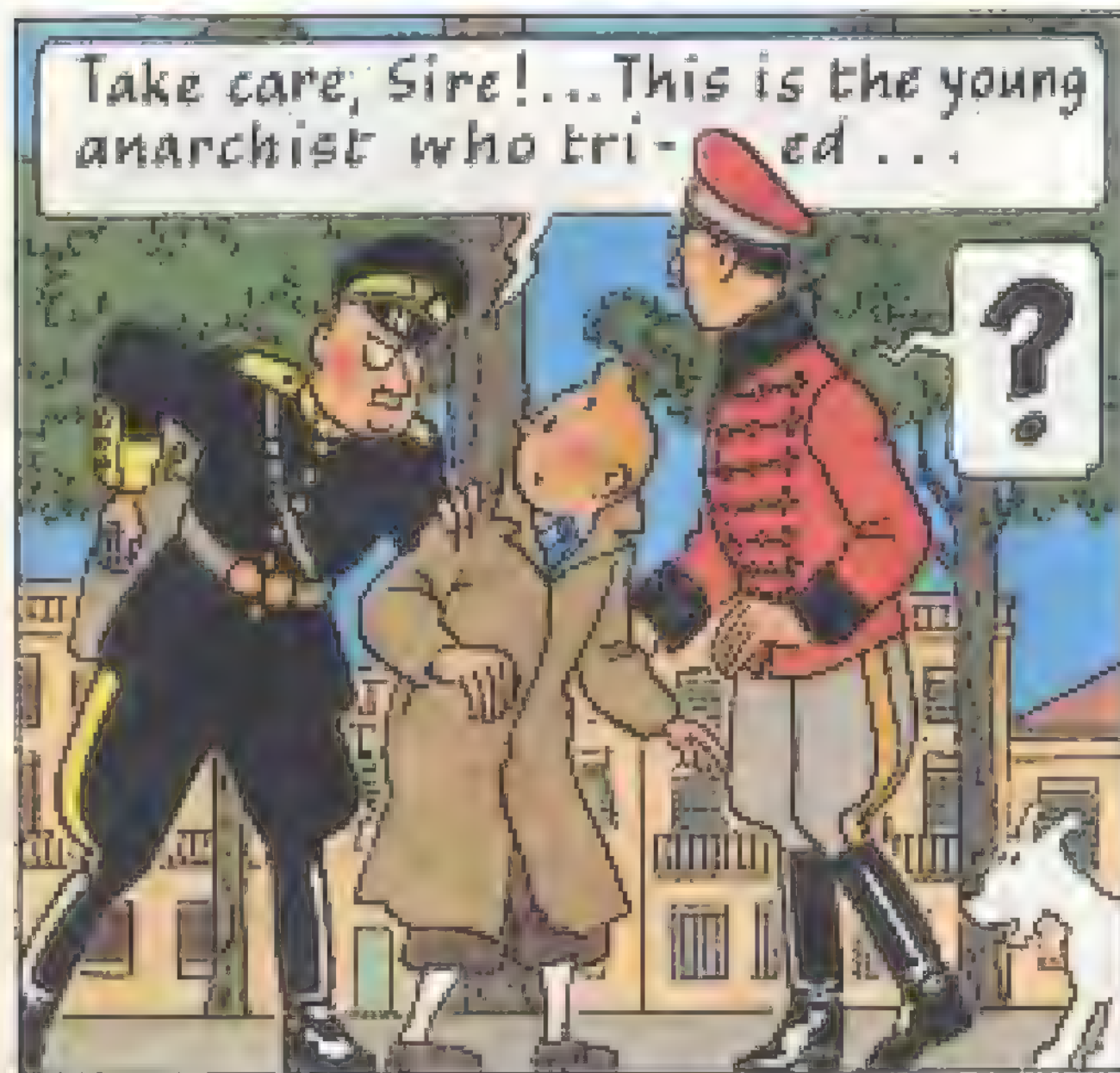
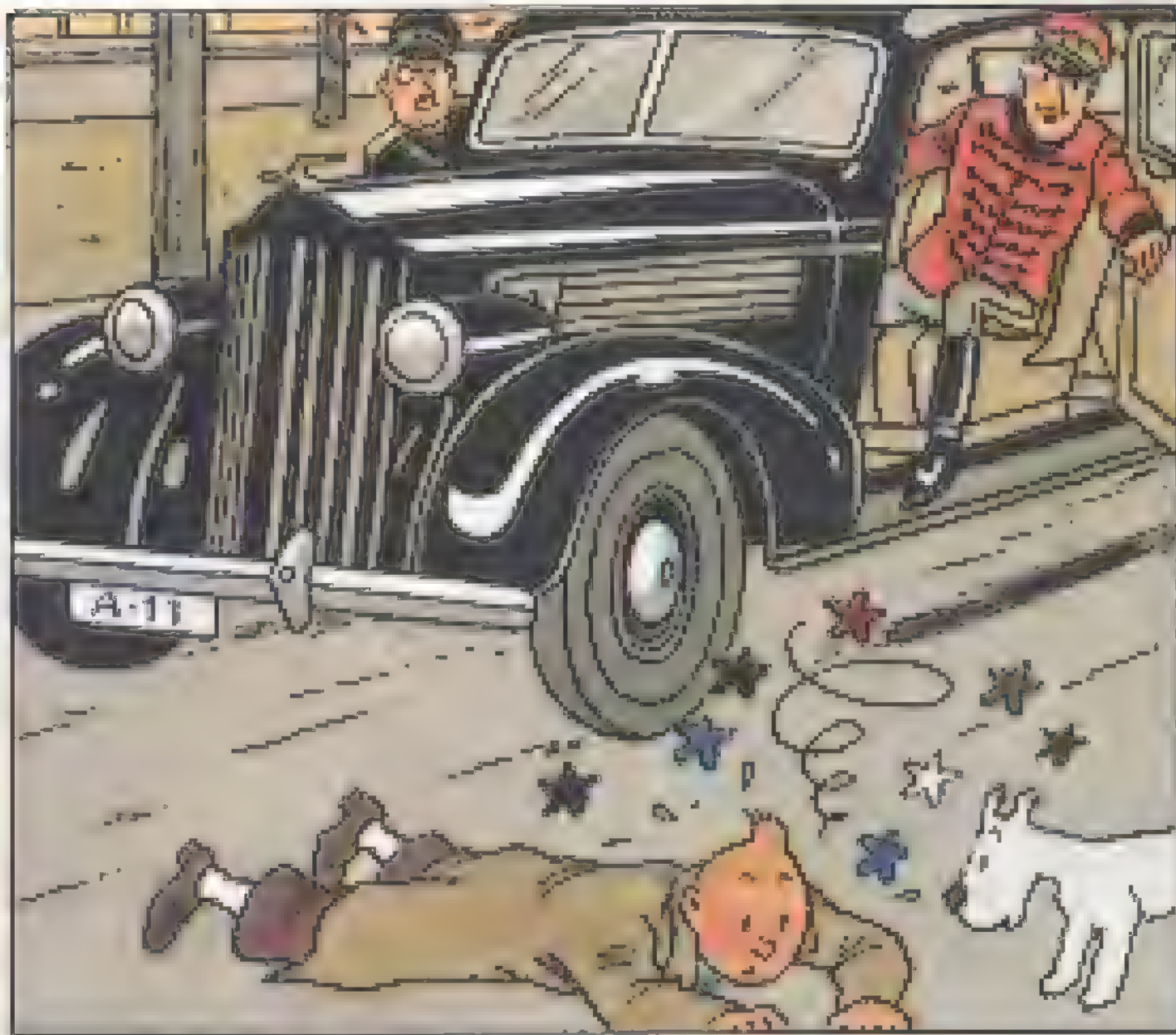
A very useful thing, concussion... Come on, Snowy! Now or never...

Aha! That's done the trick!... Now back to the palace!

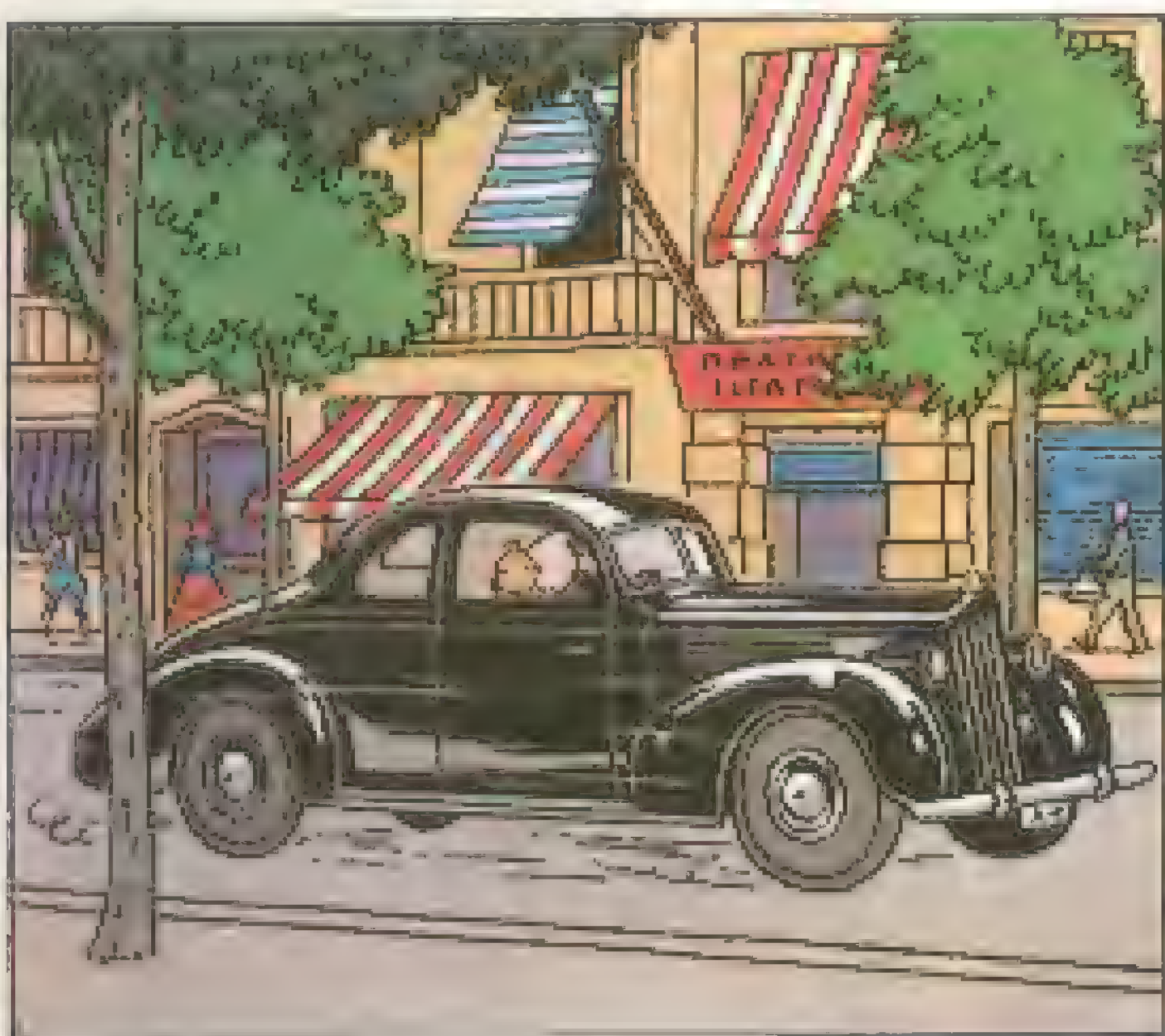
I must see the King at all costs.

This time nothing is going to stop me speaking to him!



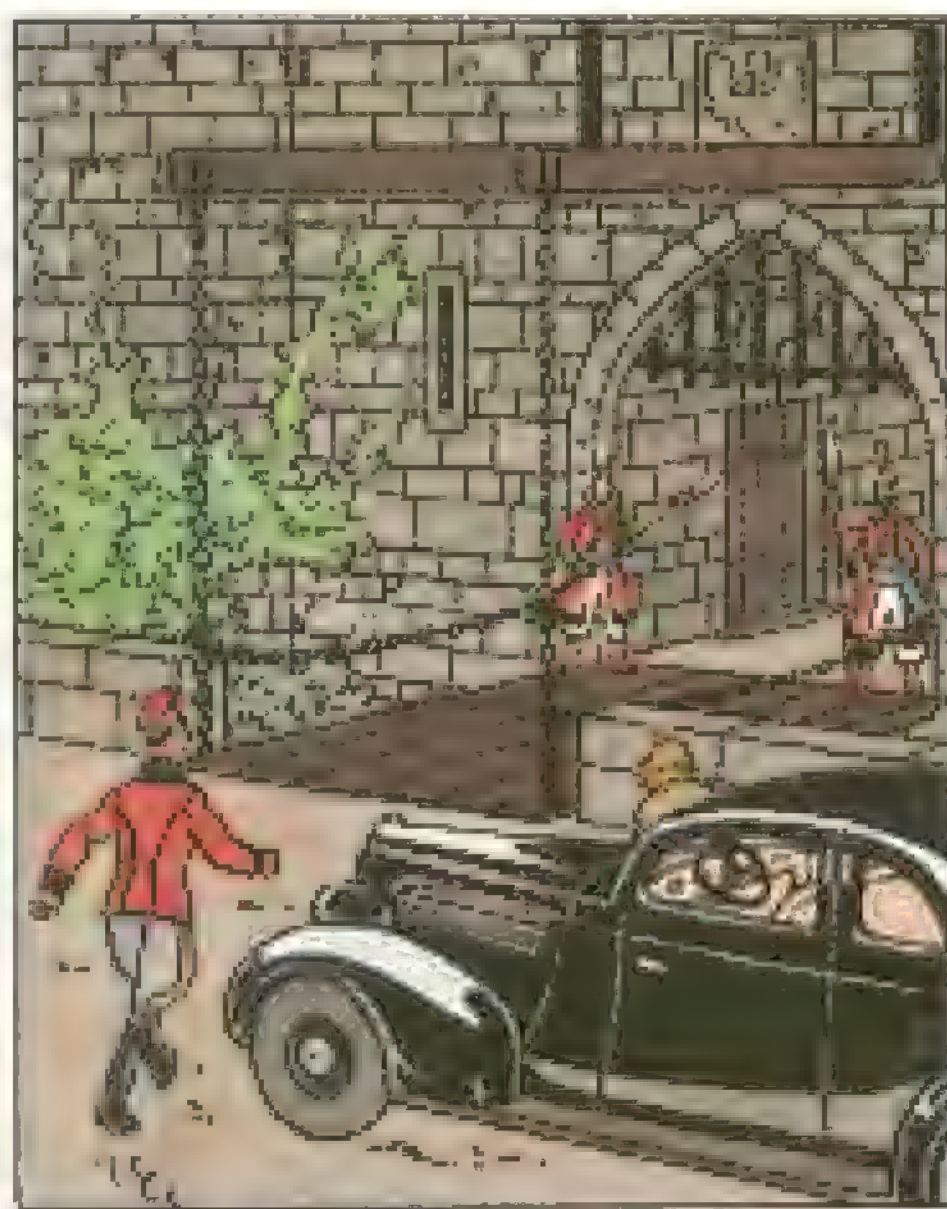
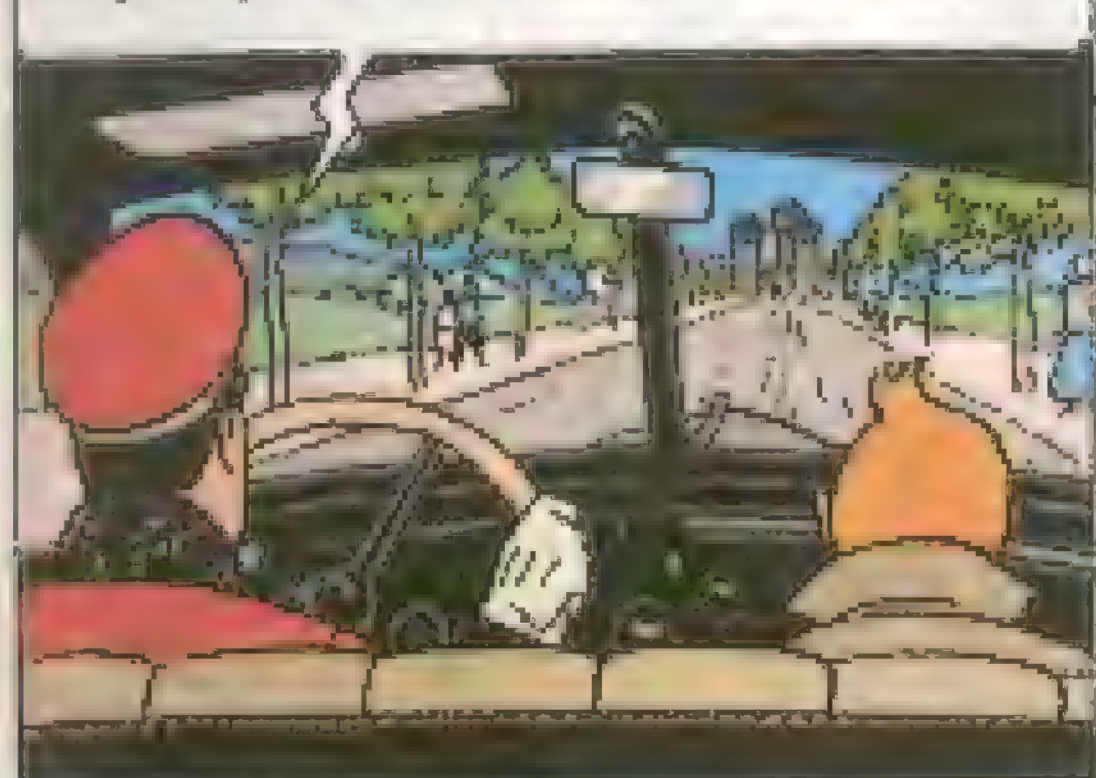






The light is not very good. We'll have to use a flash-bulb...

We're nearly there... Those are the towers of Kropow Castle... the sceptre is in the keep, that square tower in the centre... I only hope we're not too late!...



The King!...



Everything seems quite normal... We are in time!

I hope so, Sir...



Where is Professor Alembick?

In the Treasure Chamber, Sire, with the Governor of the Castle and Herr Czarlitz.



Open up! In the name of the King!

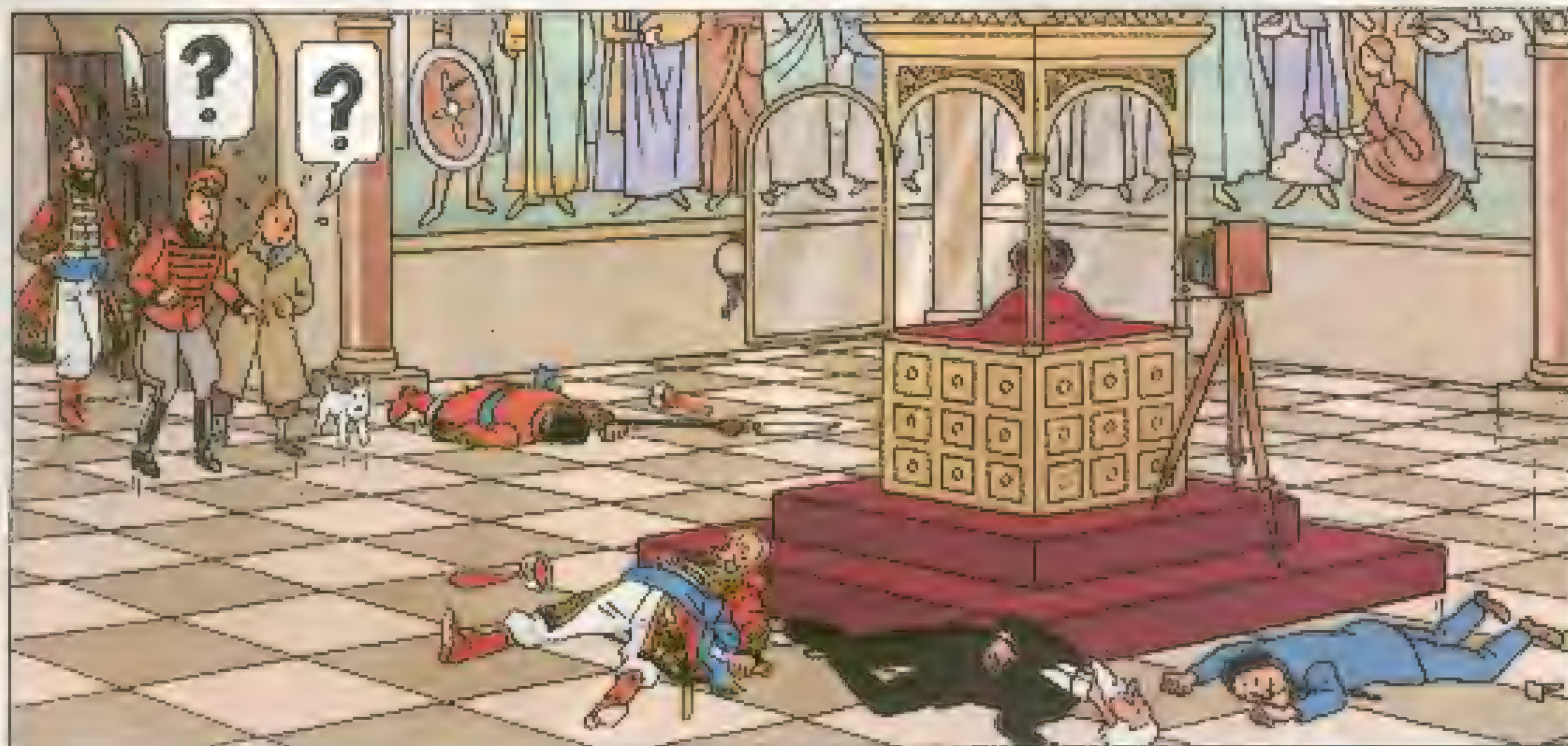


No answer! Quick, bring me the other keys!



Could it really be possible?

Let us hope not, Sir... Ah! Here is the guard with the keys.





Next morning

So, Lord Chamberlain, the sceptre has not been recovered yet?...

Alas no, Sire... But I have secured the services of two detectives of international repute... expect them any minute now...



THUD

Ah, I think I know who they are.

What's going on? ... Go and see.



?

Er... We are the detectives who... Hm... We... we slipped... and

Yes... and we fell down...



Sire, may I present Mr. Thomson and Mr. Thompson, certified detectives...

Welcome to Syldavia, gentlemen

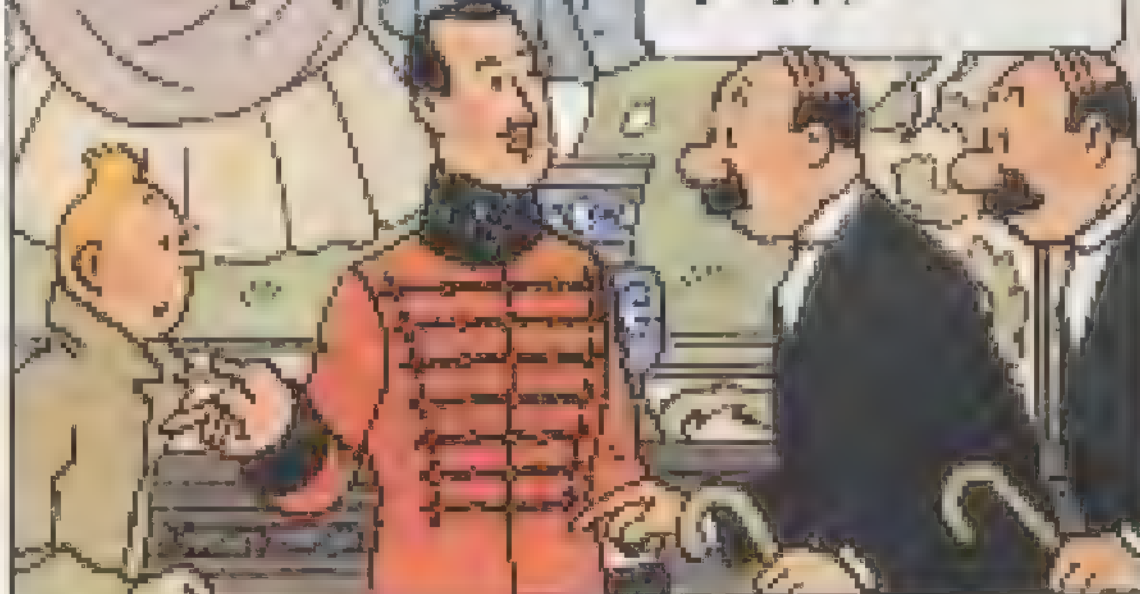
Majesty, your sire is very good... Good Majesty... No, I mean...

To be precise... it's a majesty, Your Pleasure...



We thank you for answering our call so promptly, and for placing your experience at the service of the Crown... This is Mr. Tintin, who will give you all the details of this business...

Tintin! Well I never!



This is the position... Someone has stolen the King's sceptre!... When His Majesty and I entered the Treasure Chamber we found the Governor of the Castle, two of his men, the photographer Czarlitz, and Professor Alembick, whom you know. All of them were in a coma, and none of the five came to until this morning

Have they been questioned?...

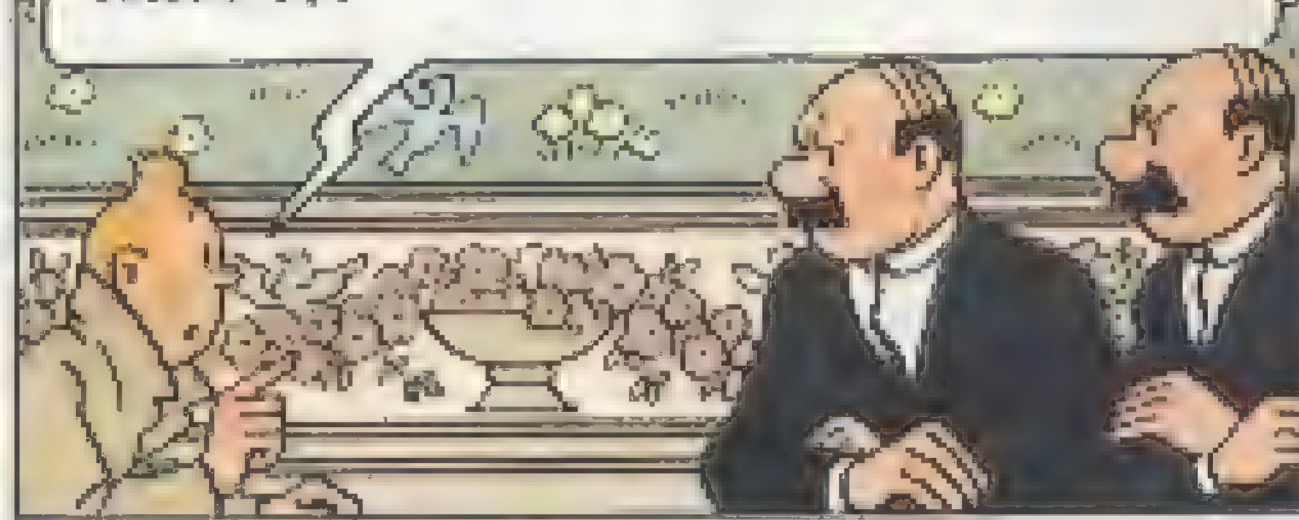


Yes, and their statements agree on all points. Herr Czarlitz decided to use a flash-bulb. After the flash the room filled with thick smoke. They began to choke, and then passed out...

Good. But... hm... did anyone think of searching these people?...



Of course! Even the guards' halberds were taken to pieces, and the camera tripod, to make sure the sceptre wasn't hidden there. They tapped every inch of the room looking for a secret passage, but found nothing! The only door through which the thief could escape was guarded by two sentries, who saw no one leave...



Your Majesty, this is all childishly simple!... With your permission we will go to Kropow Castle and demonstrate how your sceptre was stolen...

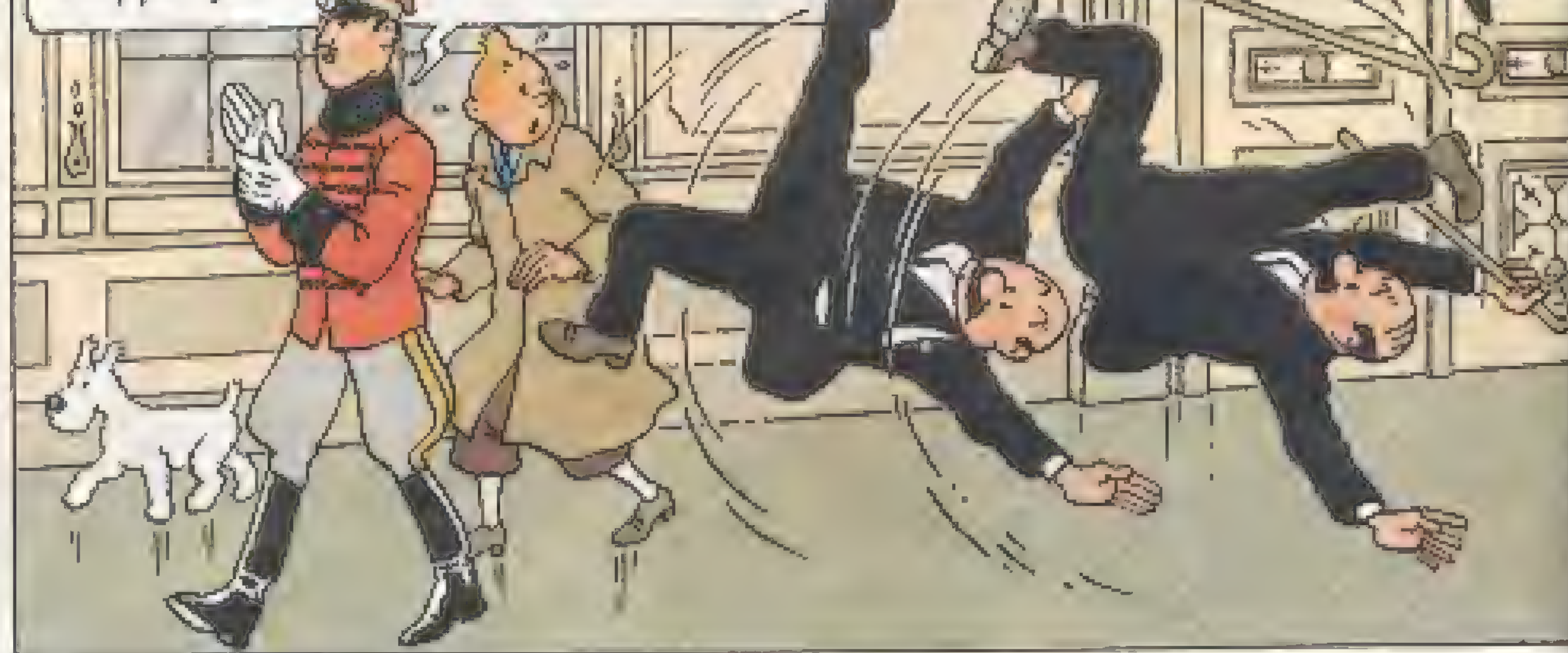


Very well, we'll go!...

Goodness, they're smarter than I thought!



Be careful: the marble is very slippery...

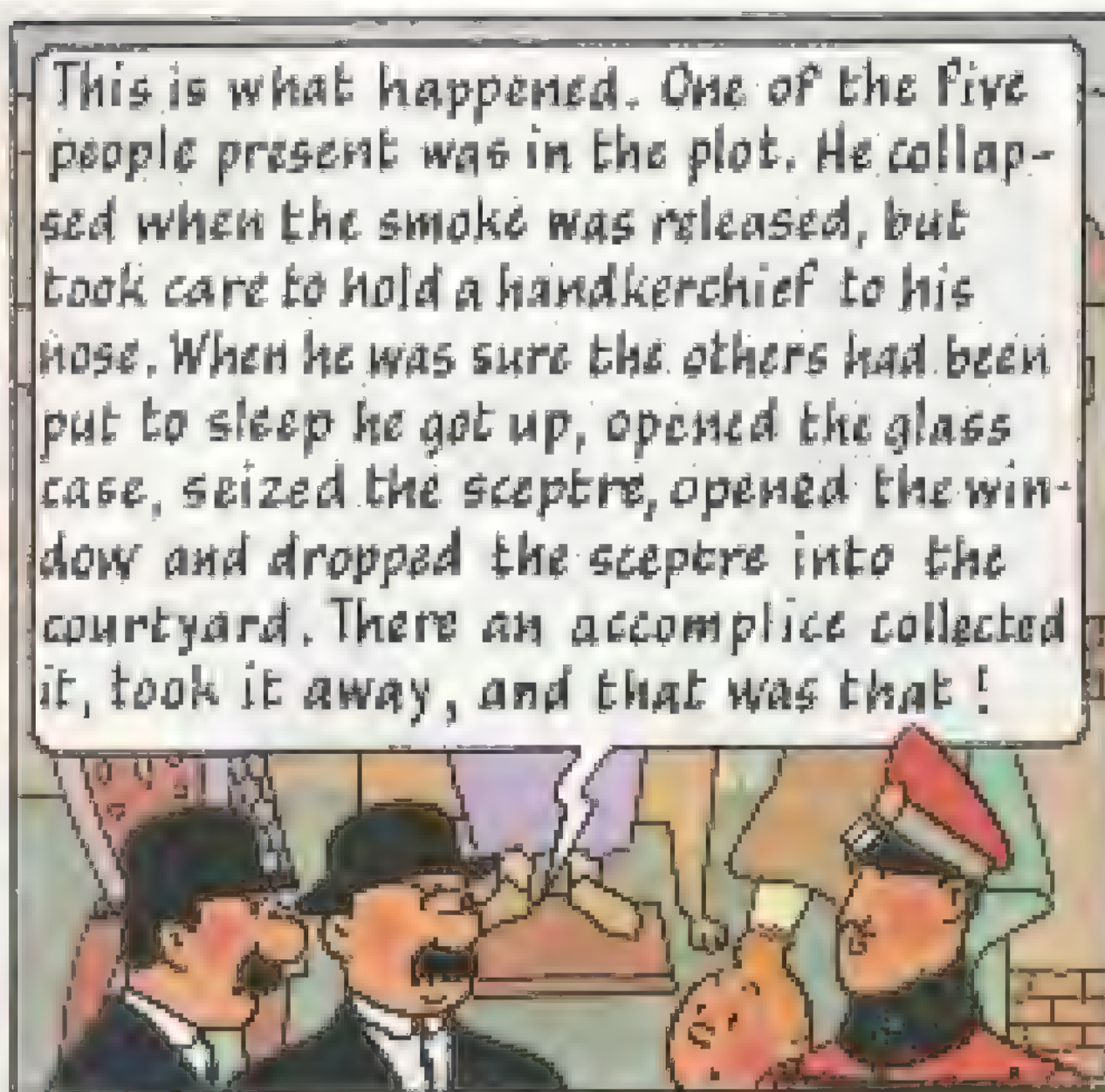






This is the Treasure Chamber. The sceptre was here...

As we said, Your Majesty: the whole thing is childishly simple!



This is what happened. One of the five people present was in the plot. He collapsed when the smoke was released, but took care to hold a handkerchief to his nose. When he was sure the others had been put to sleep he got up, opened the glass case, seized the sceptre, opened the window and dropped the sceptre into the courtyard. There an accomplice collected it, took it away, and that was that!



Impossible, gentlemen! The courtyard is guarded. No one goes there but the sentries; and the sentries are above suspicion... They are men of absolute trust who would die rather than betray their King!



As a matter of fact the guard patrolling this side of the tower did hear a window open and shut. But he did not notice anything unusual...

Exactly!... Because the thief must have thrown the sceptre over the ramparts surrounding the castle!... An accomplice waited there, picked it up, and made off.



However, you shall see... Could you get me something the same size as the sceptre?...

Certainly...



But look! It is at least a hundred yards from this window to the ramparts!... And there are bars...

What do they matter?... It just needs a good aim...



There... Will this do?...

Perfectly



Now I'll show you...



?

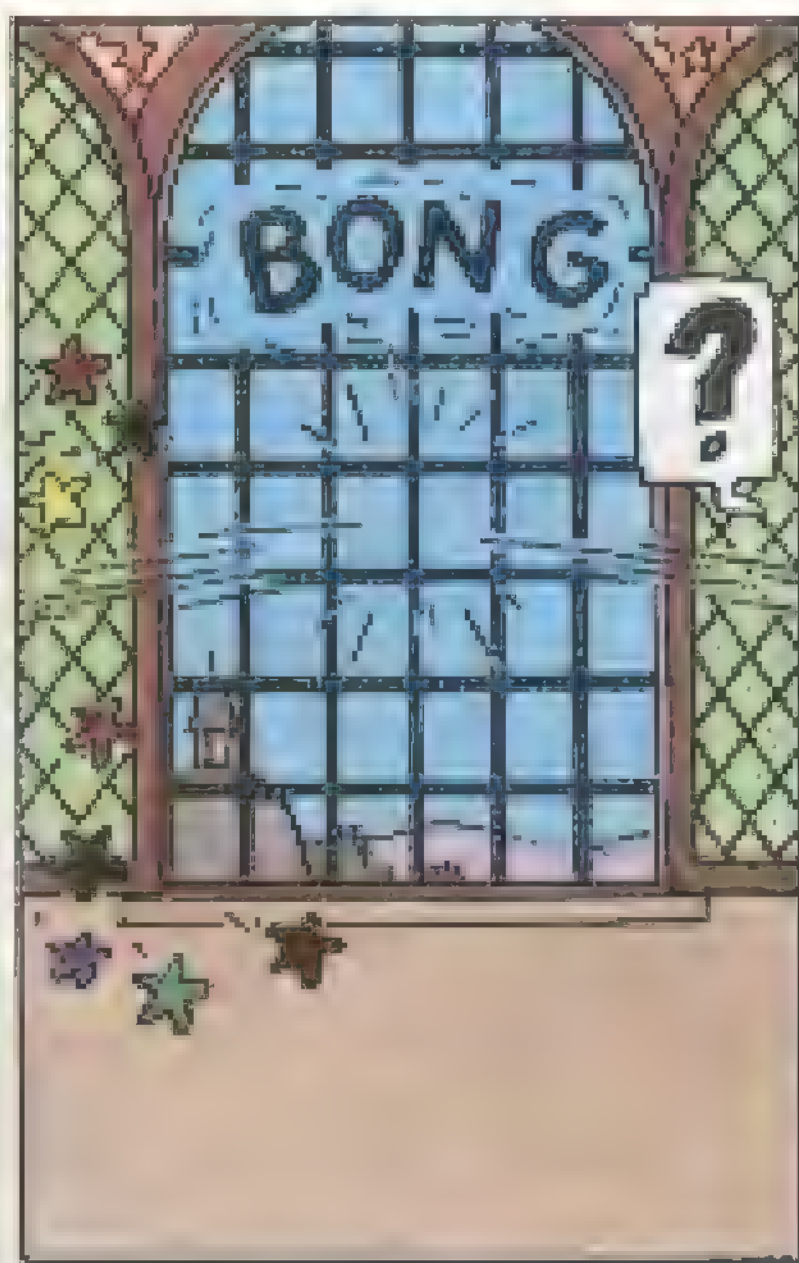
BONG



Clumsy oaf!... Let me show you the right way to do it!...



Watch carefully!



BONG

?



You can see for yourselves that the sceptre didn't leave this room like that!...

Yes... Yes... maybe. Anyway, we'd like to question Alembick and Czarlitz...



Sire!... Sire!... Ah, at last I've found you...

?





Sire!... It's unbelievable!... Professor Alembick and Herr Czarlitz...

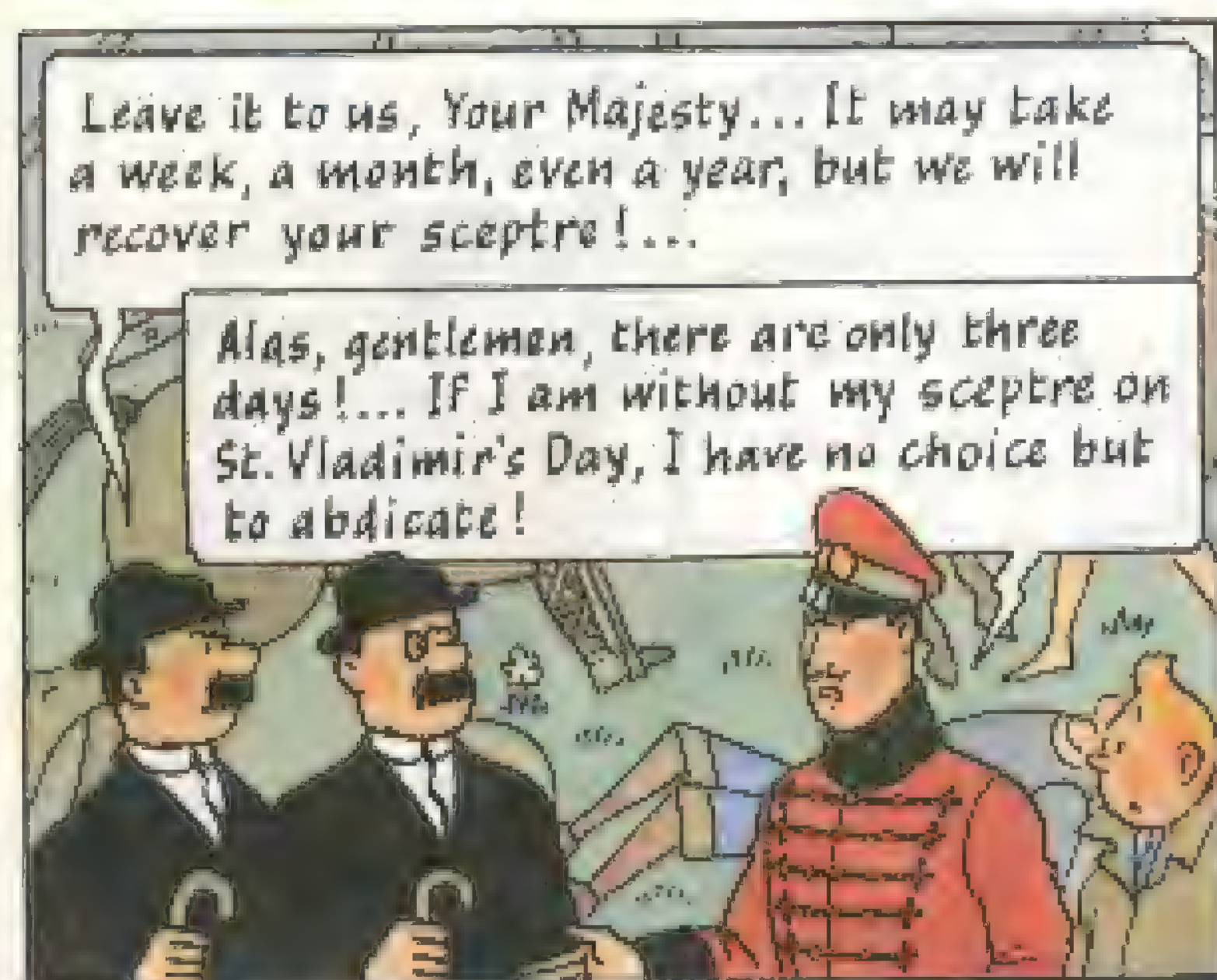


...have escaped from the State Prison, Sire... They had accomplices among the warders!... Four of them have disappeared with the fugitives!

By the Sceptre of Ottokar!

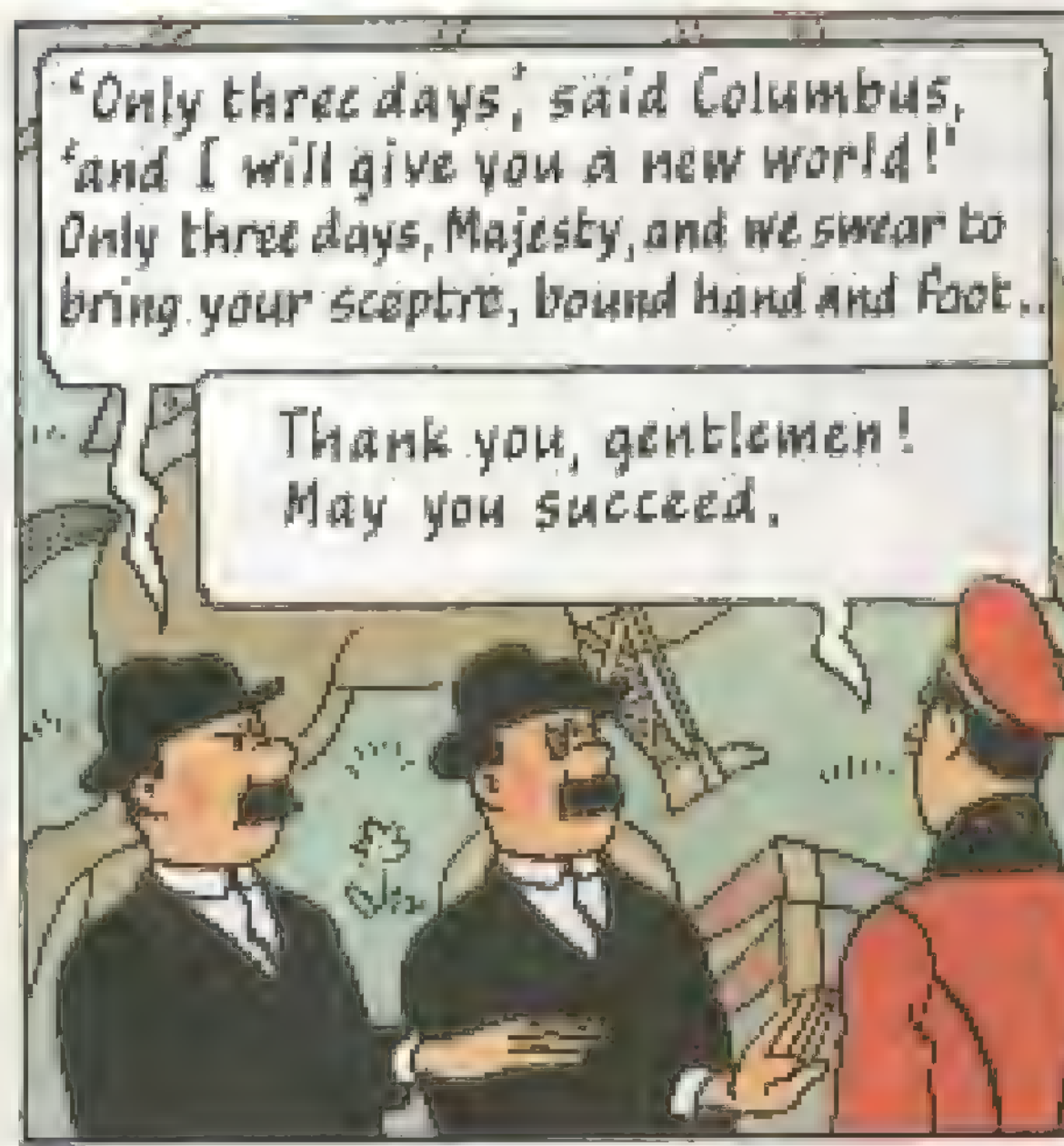


Accomplices!... Accomplices!... They are everywhere!... Oh, the plot was well laid: all is lost!



Leave it to us, Your Majesty... It may take a week, a month, even a year, but we will recover your sceptre!...

Alas, gentlemen, there are only three days!... If I am without my sceptre on St. Vladimir's Day, I have no choice but to abdicate!



'Only three days,' said Columbus, 'and I will give you a new world!' Only three days, Majesty, and we swear to bring your sceptre, bound hand and foot..

Thank you, gentlemen! May you succeed.



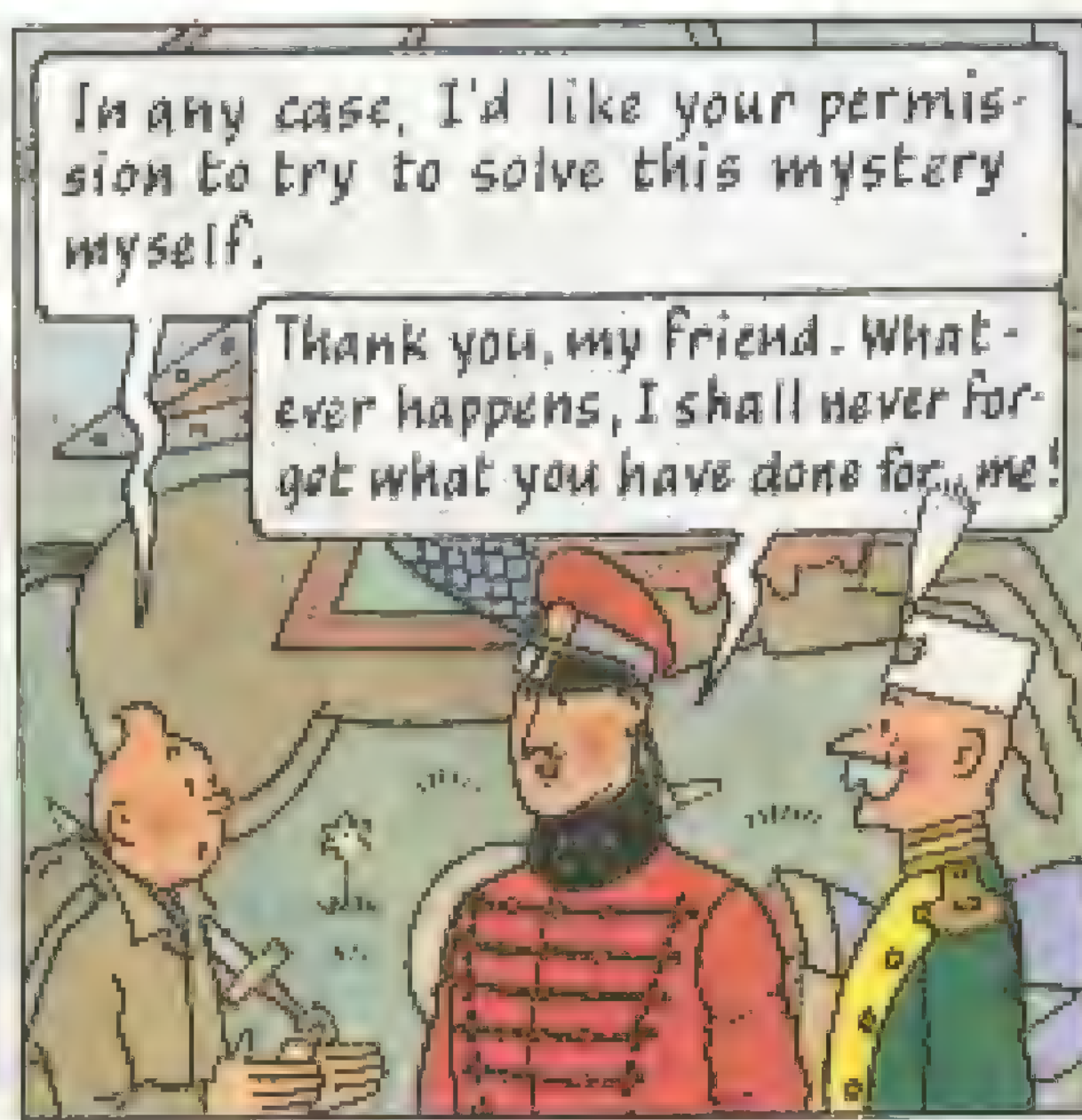
This time our honour is at stake! We have sworn to find the sceptre; we must keep our word!

To be precise: we must keep our word!



St. Vladimir protect them!... They will succeed, won't they?...

I hope so, Sir, with all my heart!



In any case, I'd like your permission to try to solve this mystery myself.

Thank you, my friend. Whatever happens, I shall never forget what you have done for me!



The vital thing is to find out HOW the sceptre was stolen...

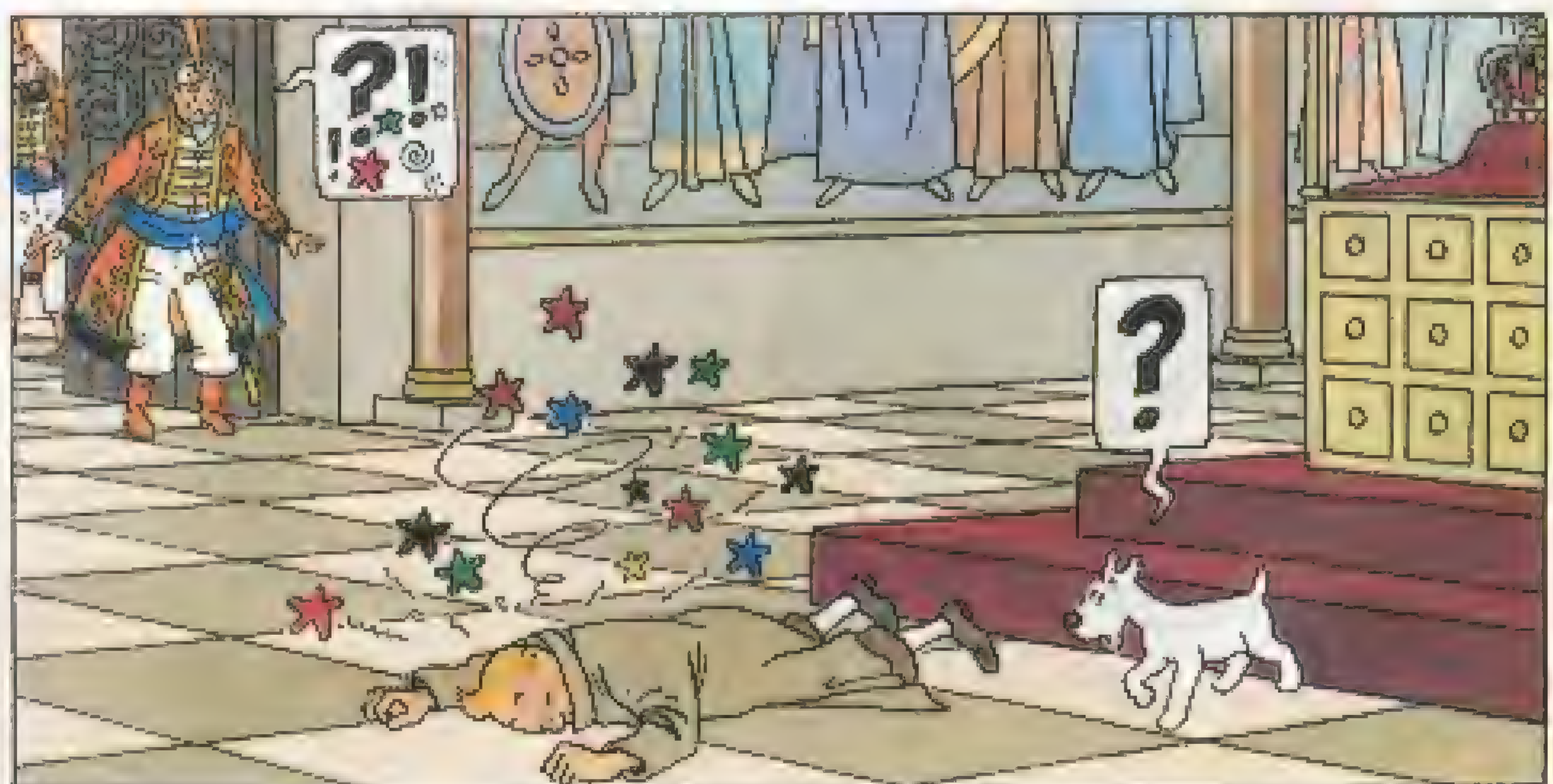
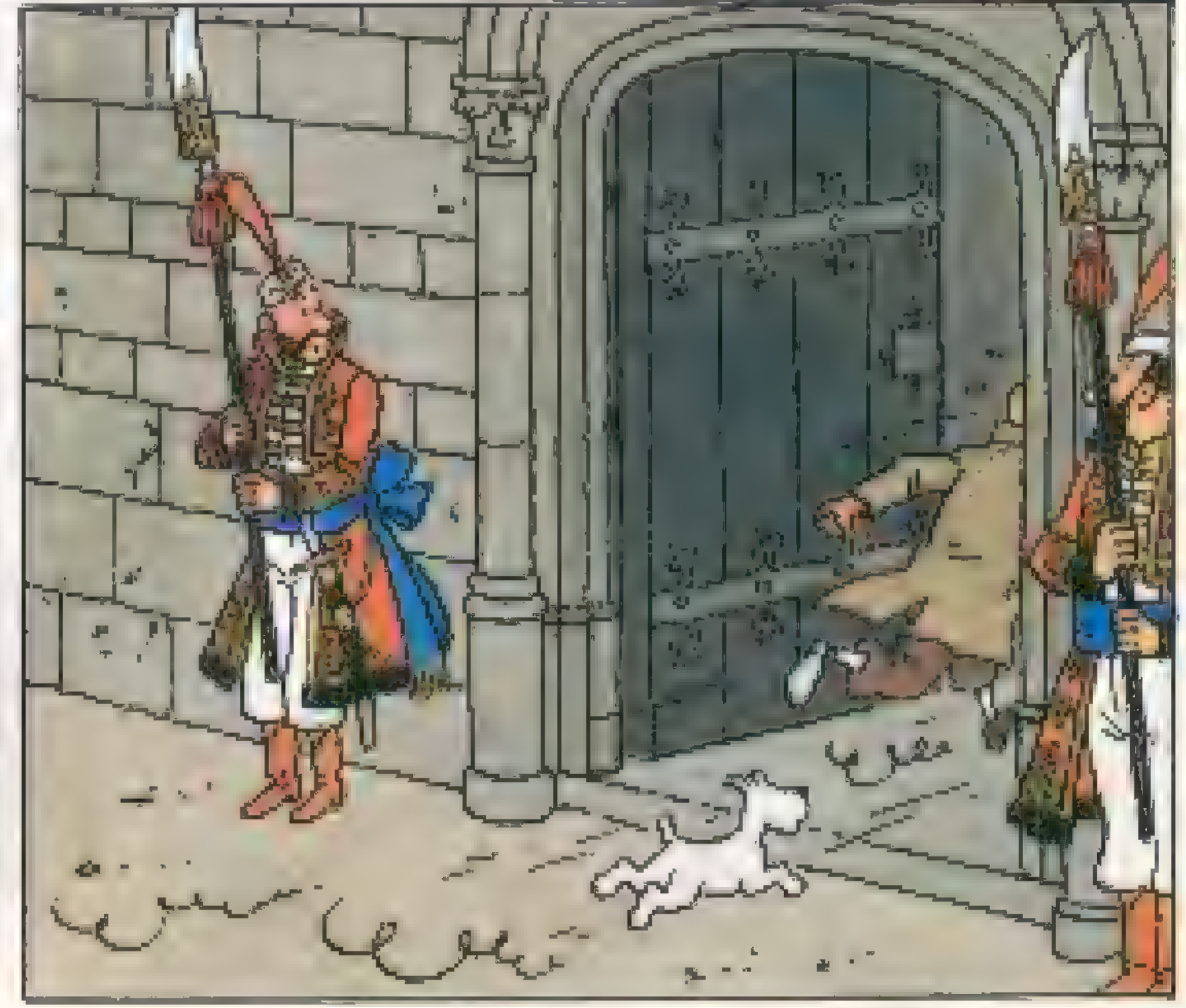
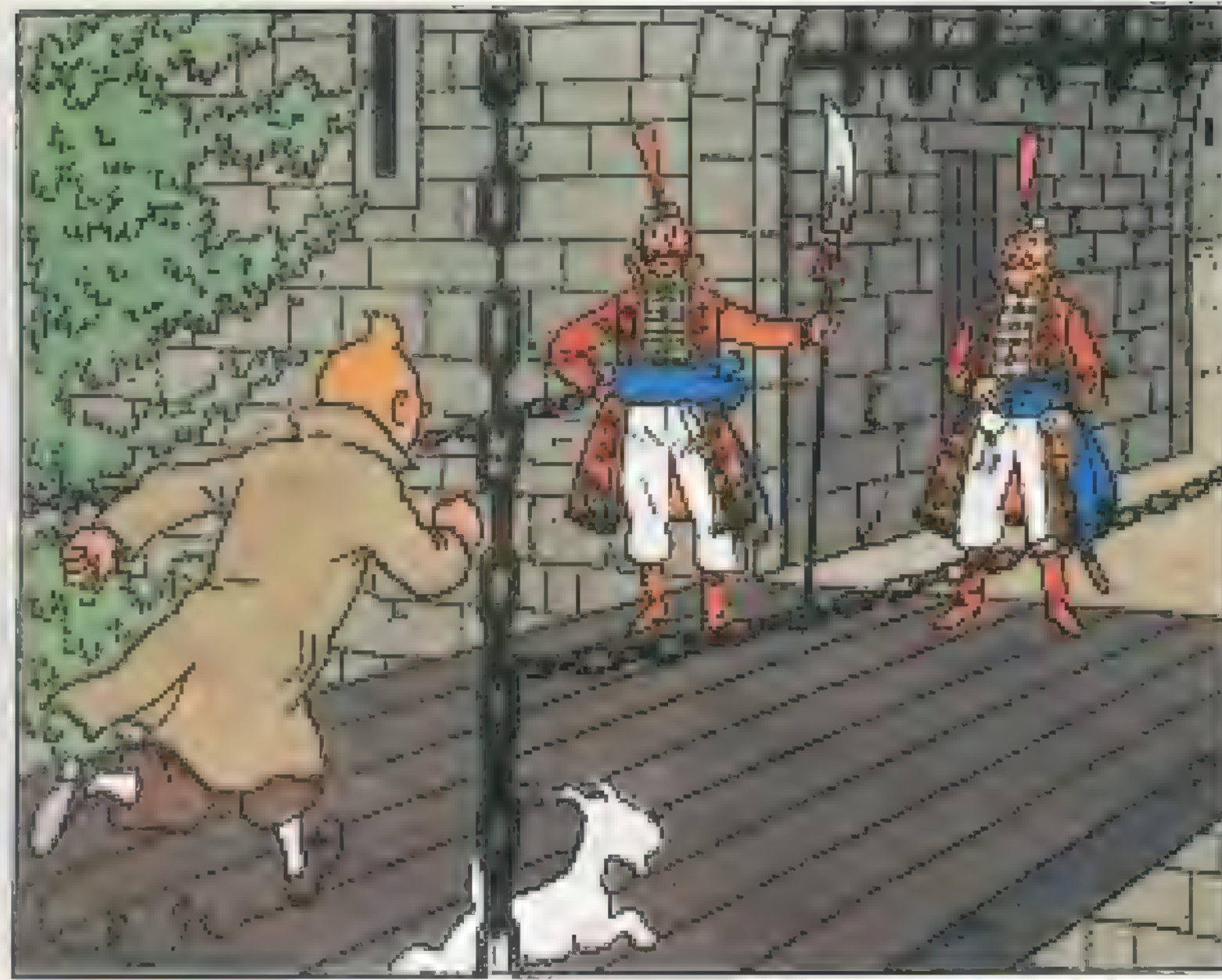


!?

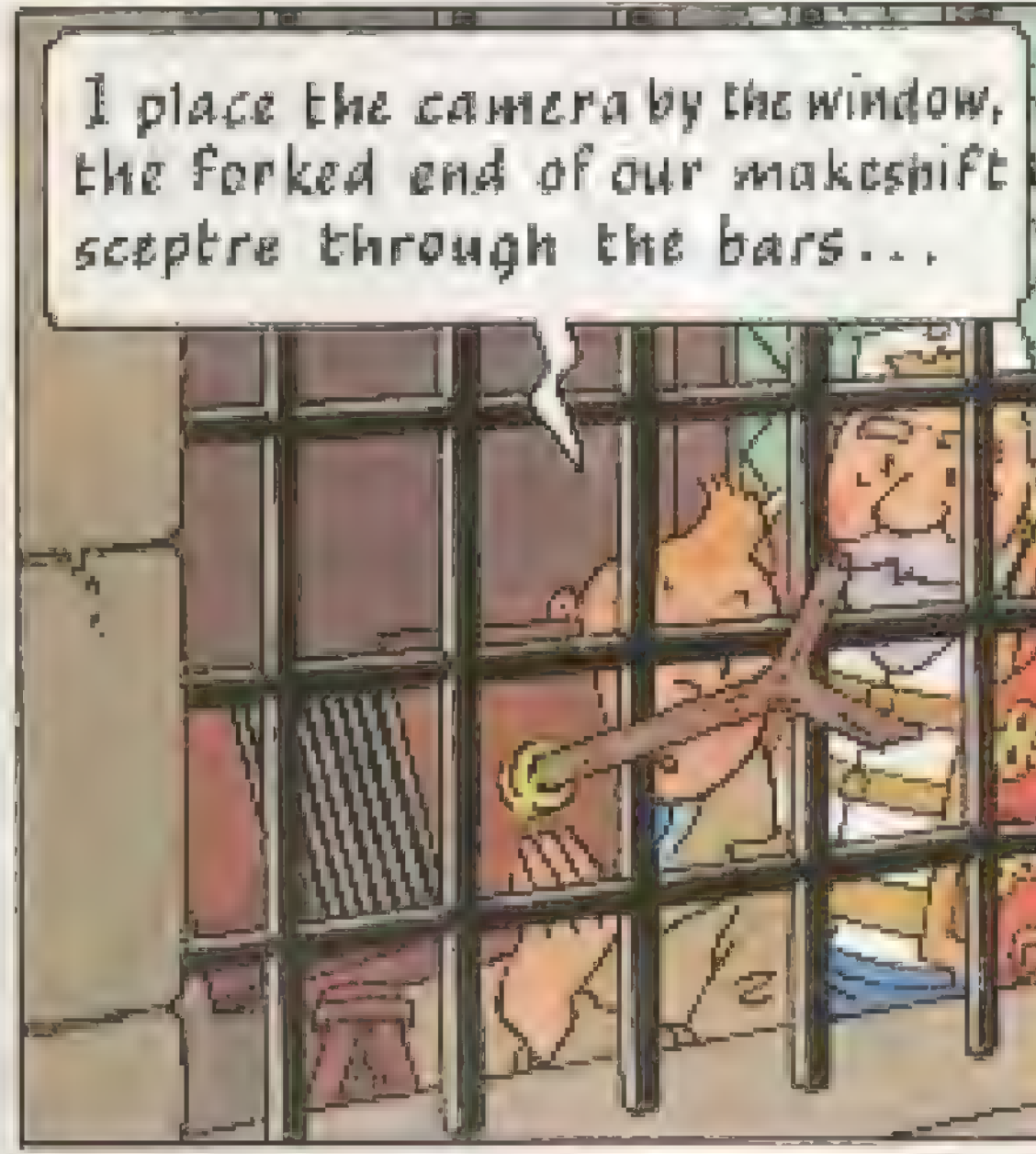
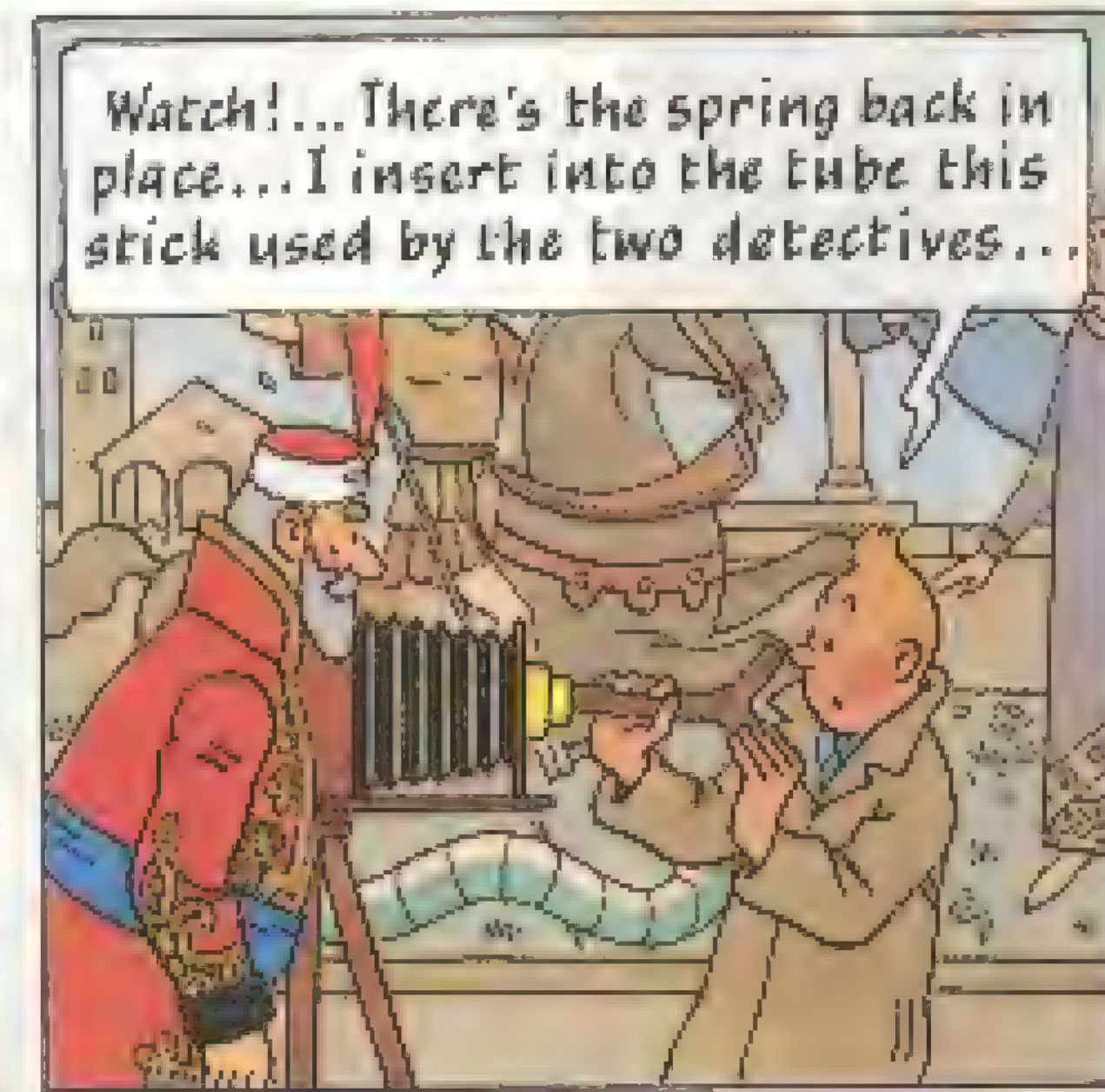
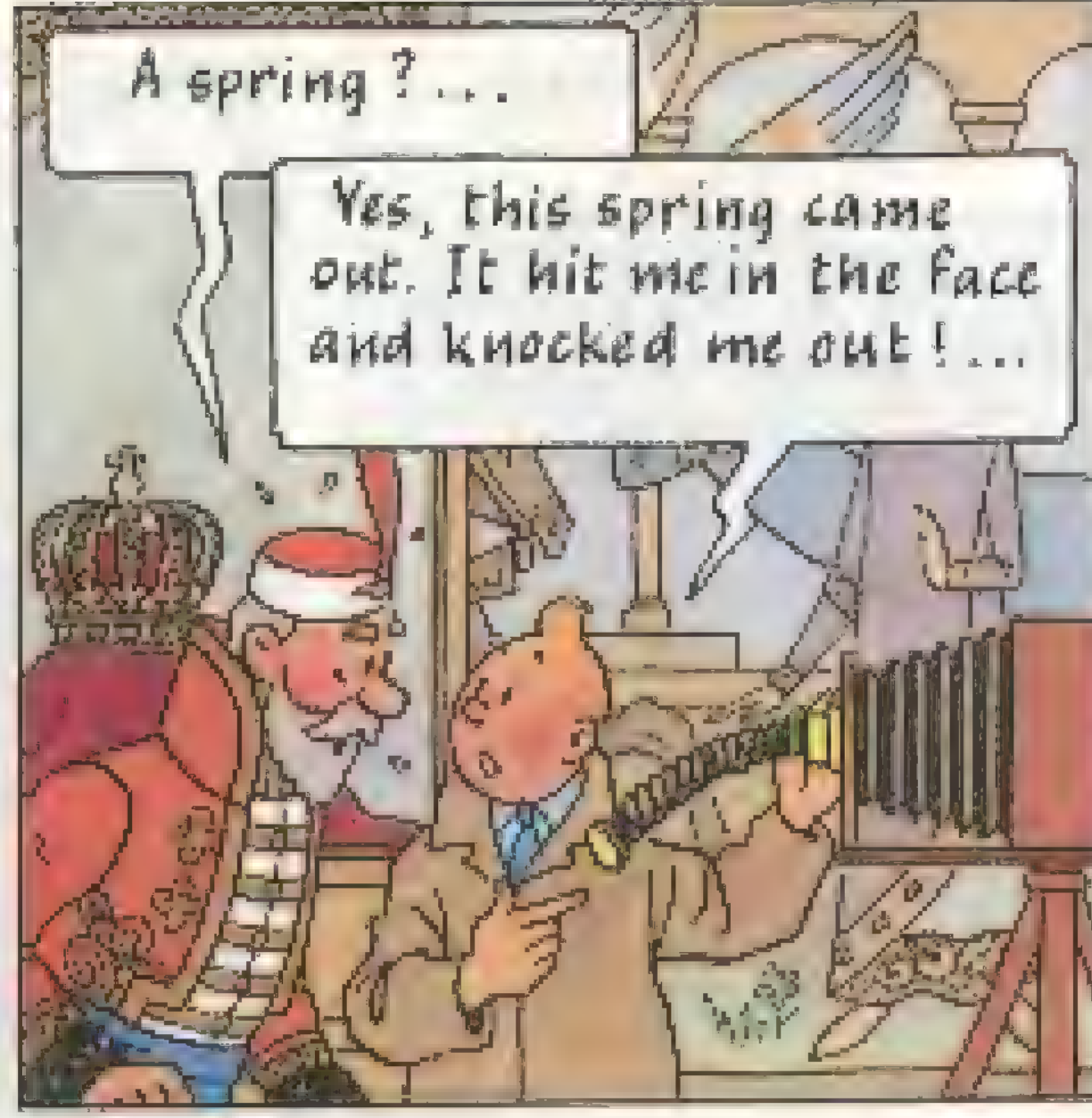


Eureka!... Eureka!... I've got it!





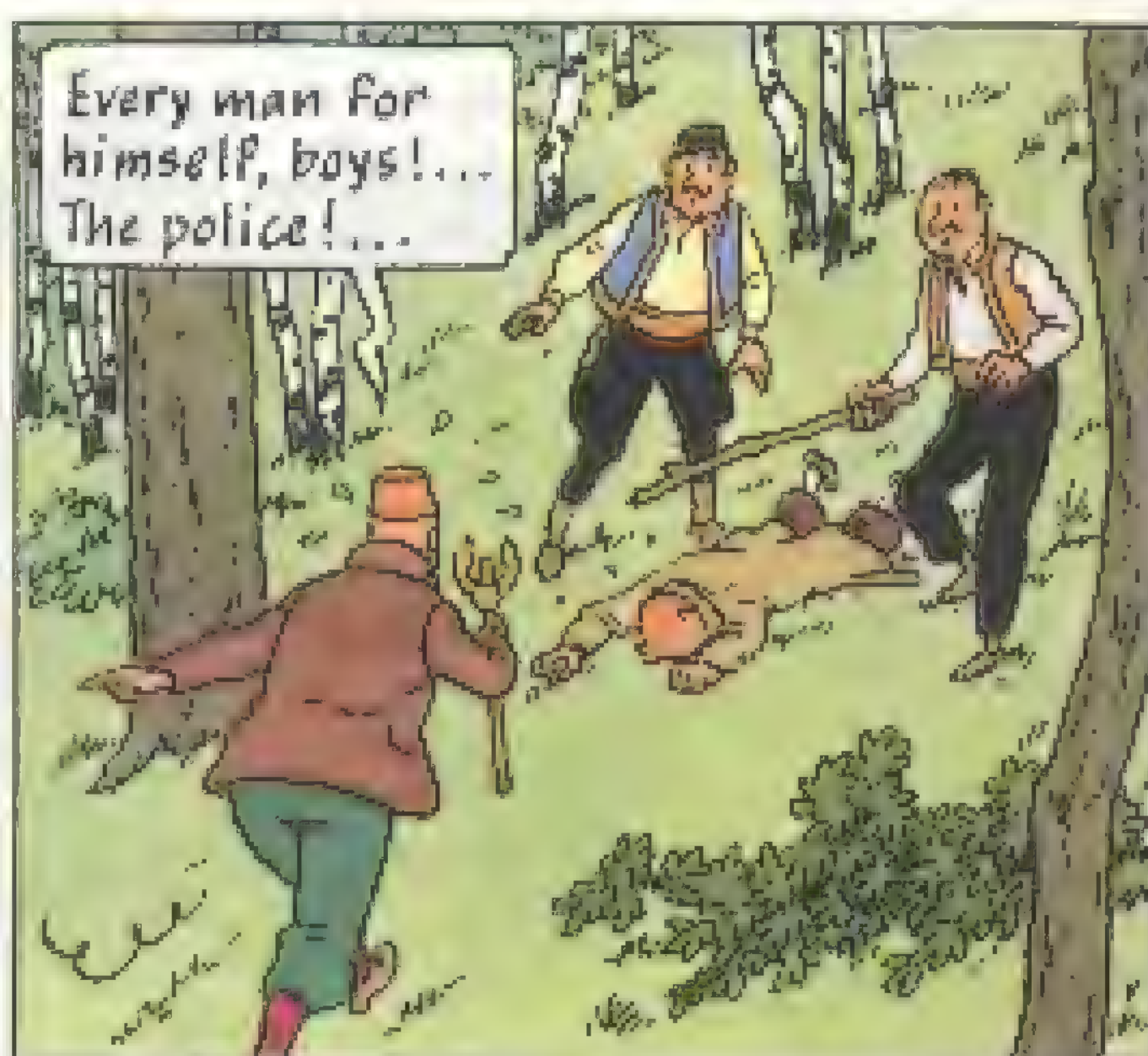
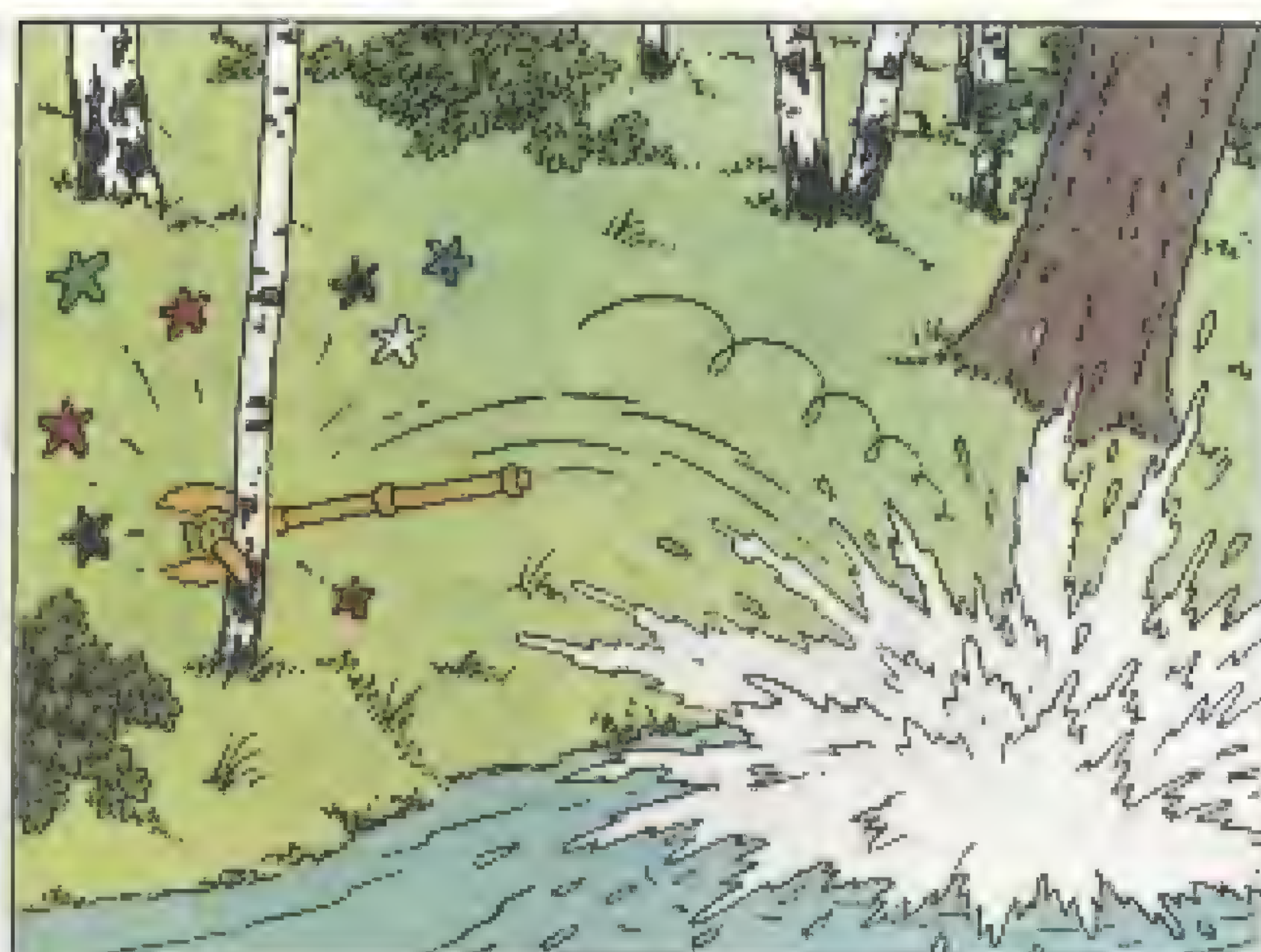




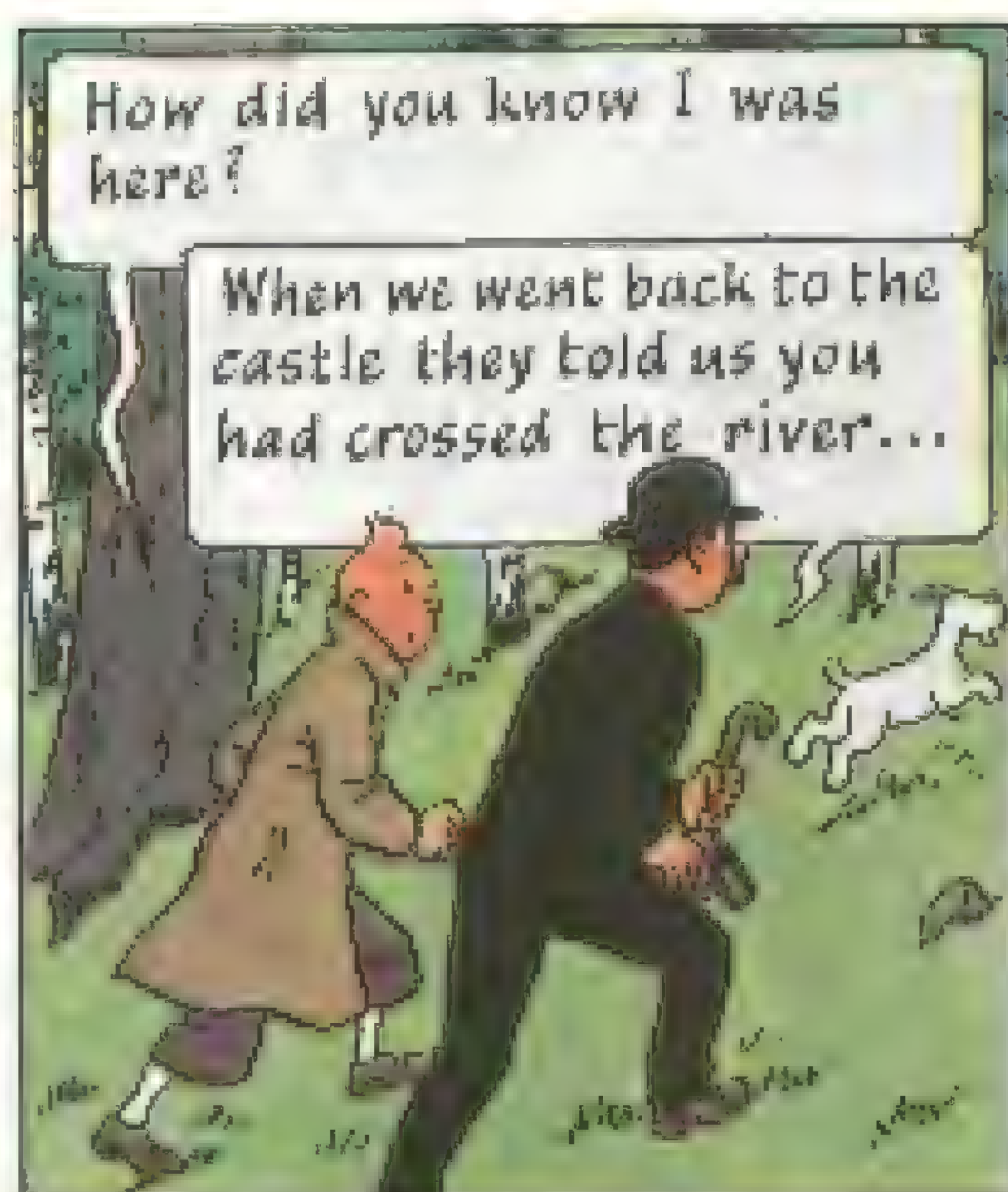












How did you know I was here?

When we went back to the castle they told us you had crossed the river...

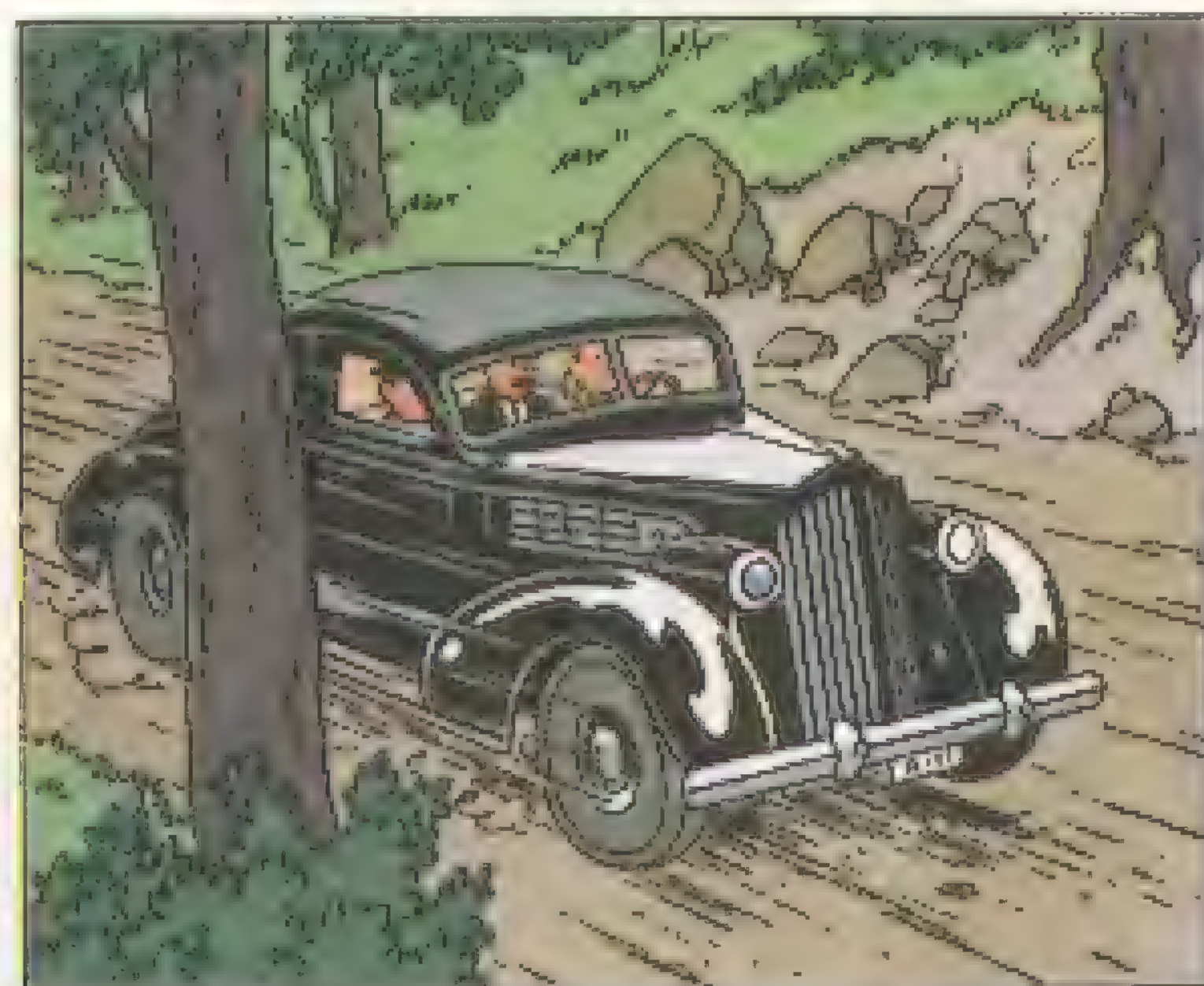


There's the King... They told him, too. He went round by the bridge while we crossed in a boat...

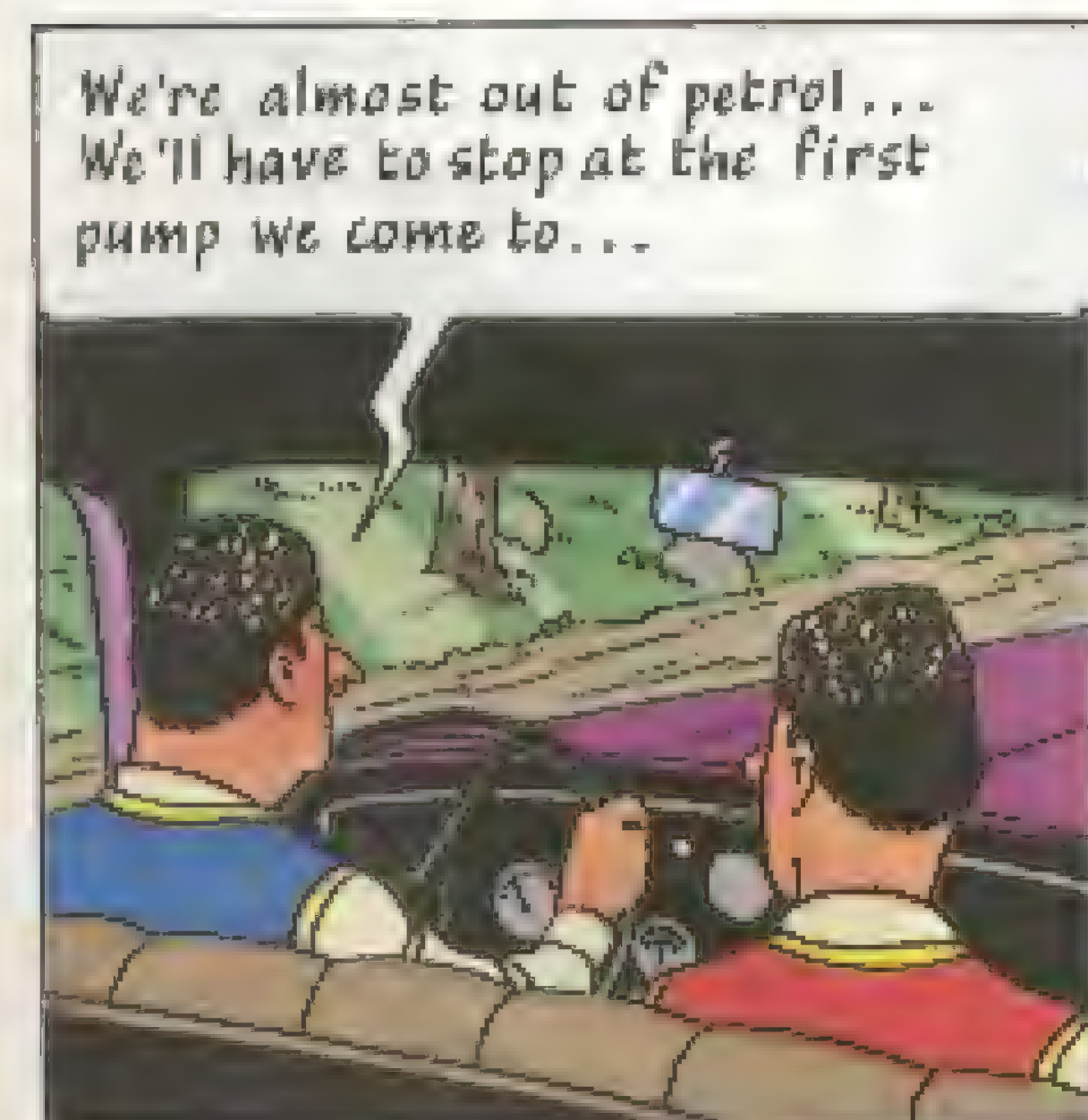
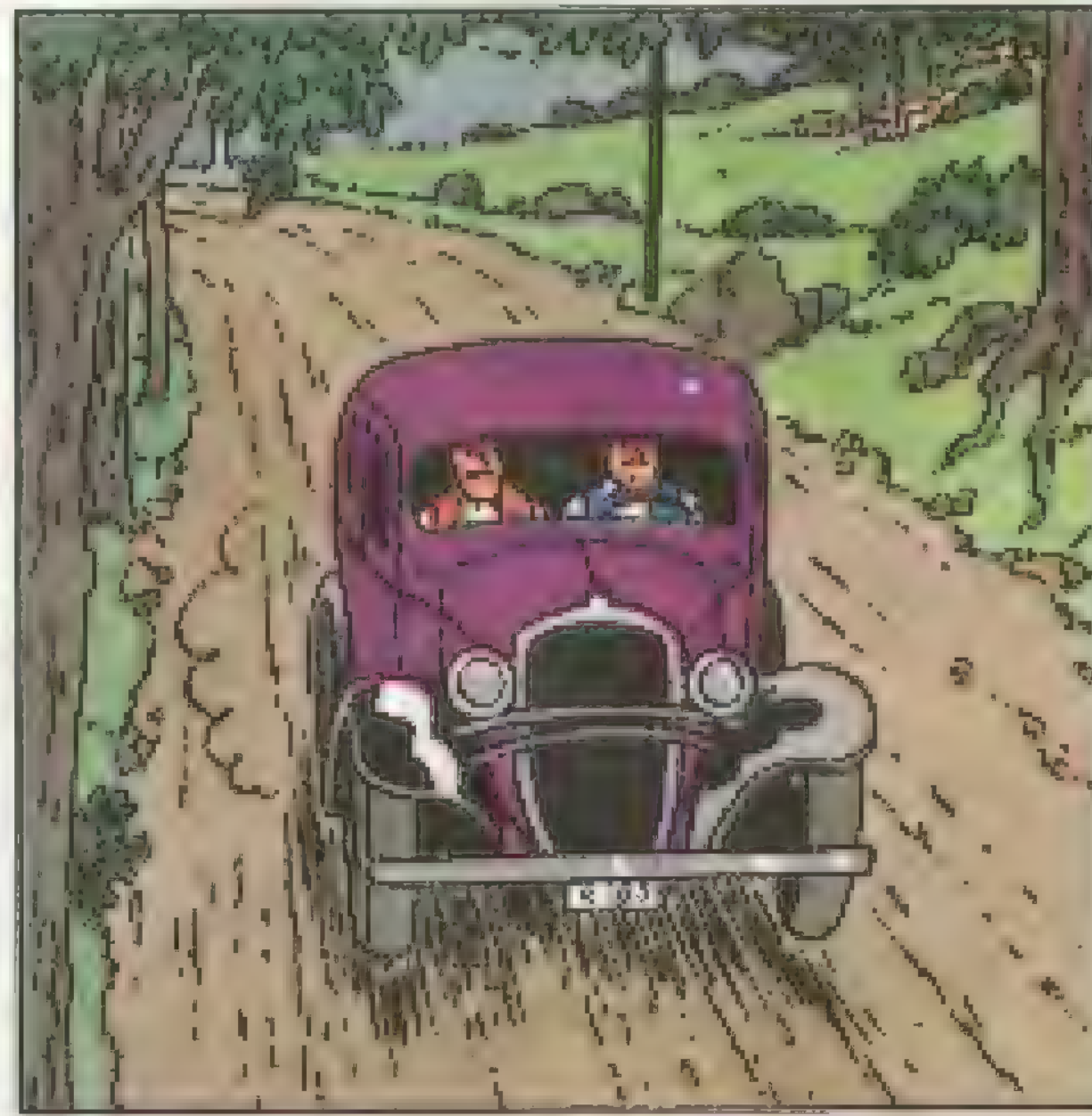


Well, what has happened?...

Those gangsters have got away in a car, with the sceptre!... If you will lend us your car, Sir, we three will try and catch them...



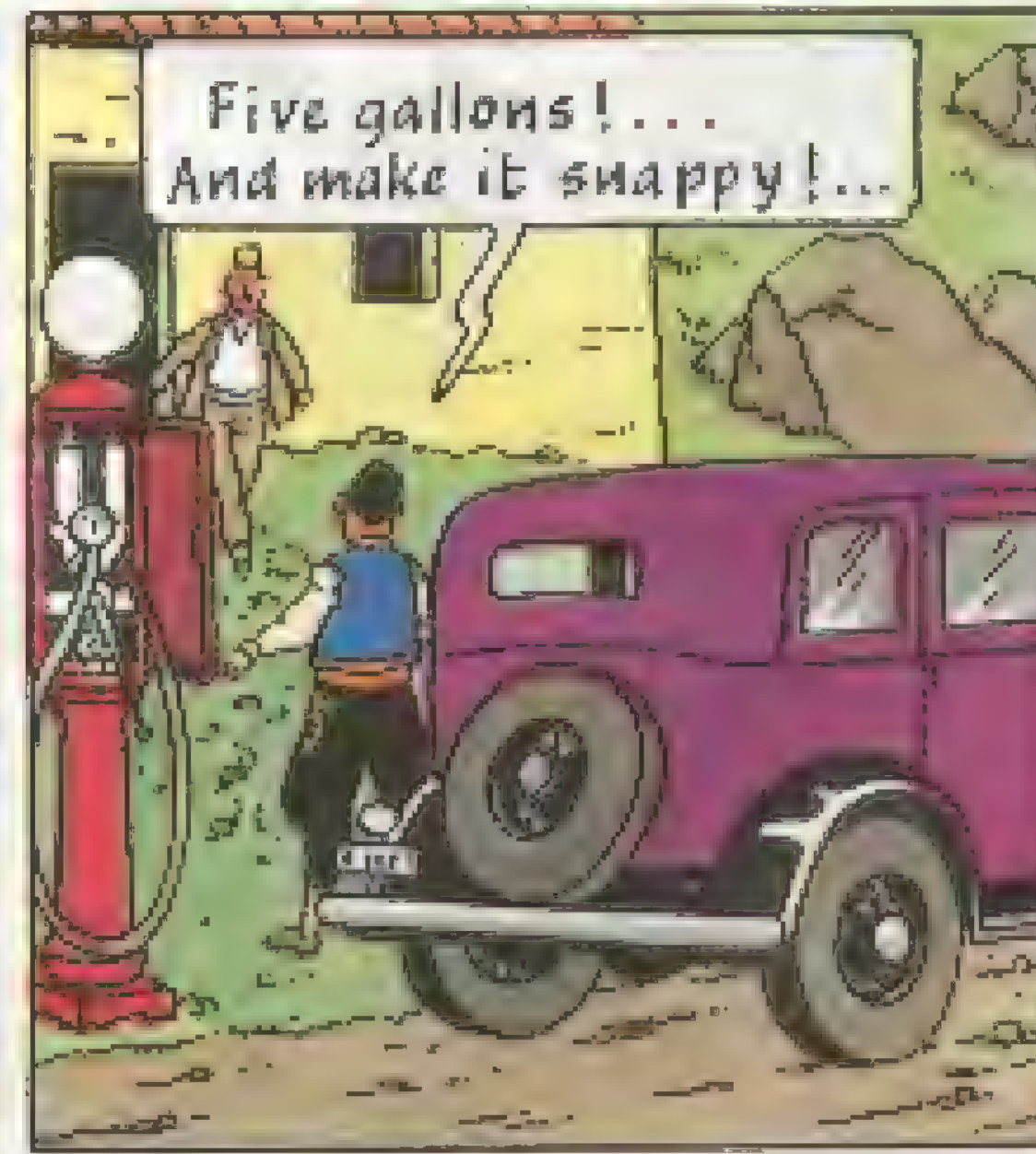
They haven't got much of a start on us... We'll soon catch them up.



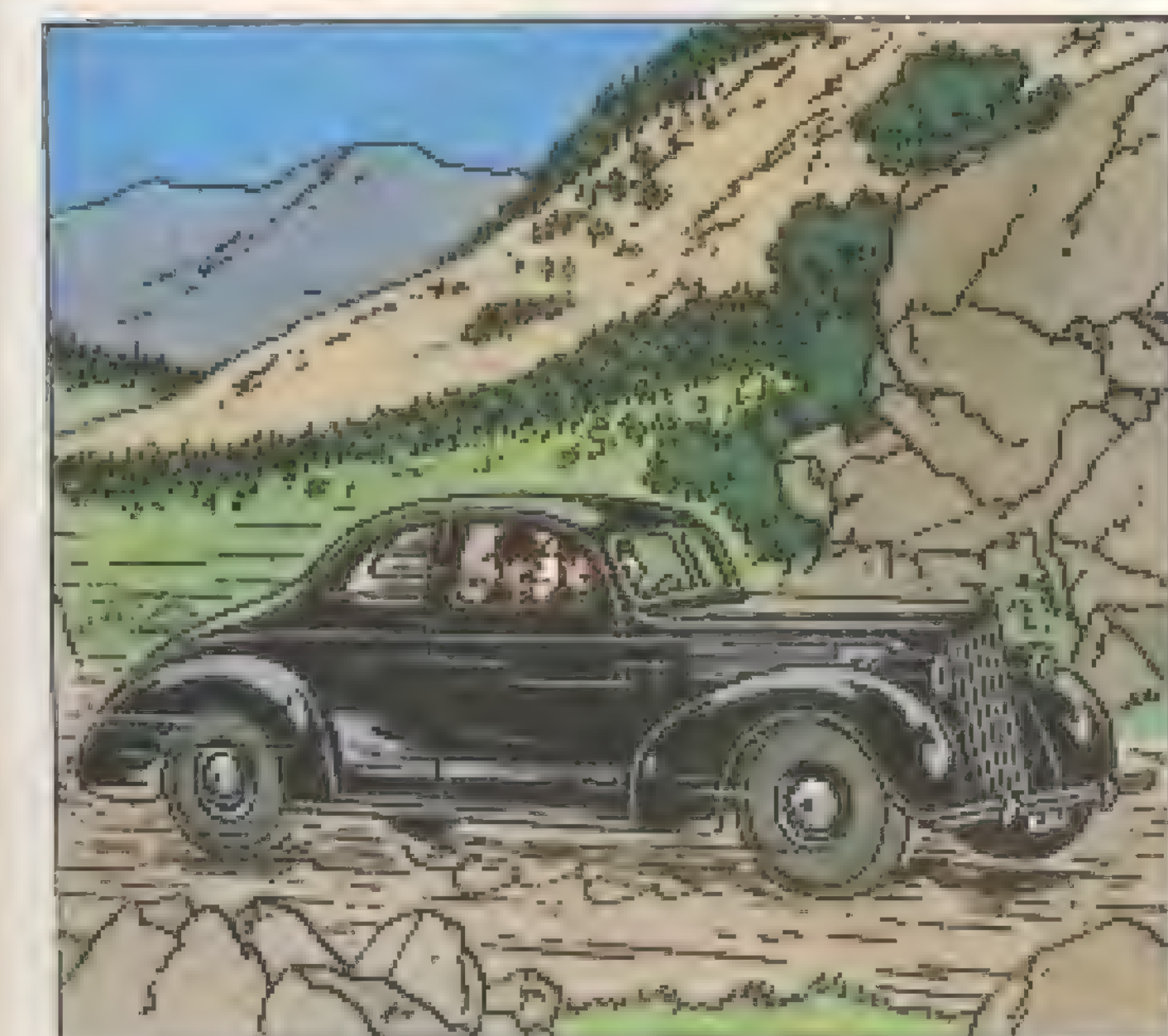
We're almost out of petrol... We'll have to stop at the first pump we come to...



Ah! There's one...



Five gallons!... And make it snappy!...

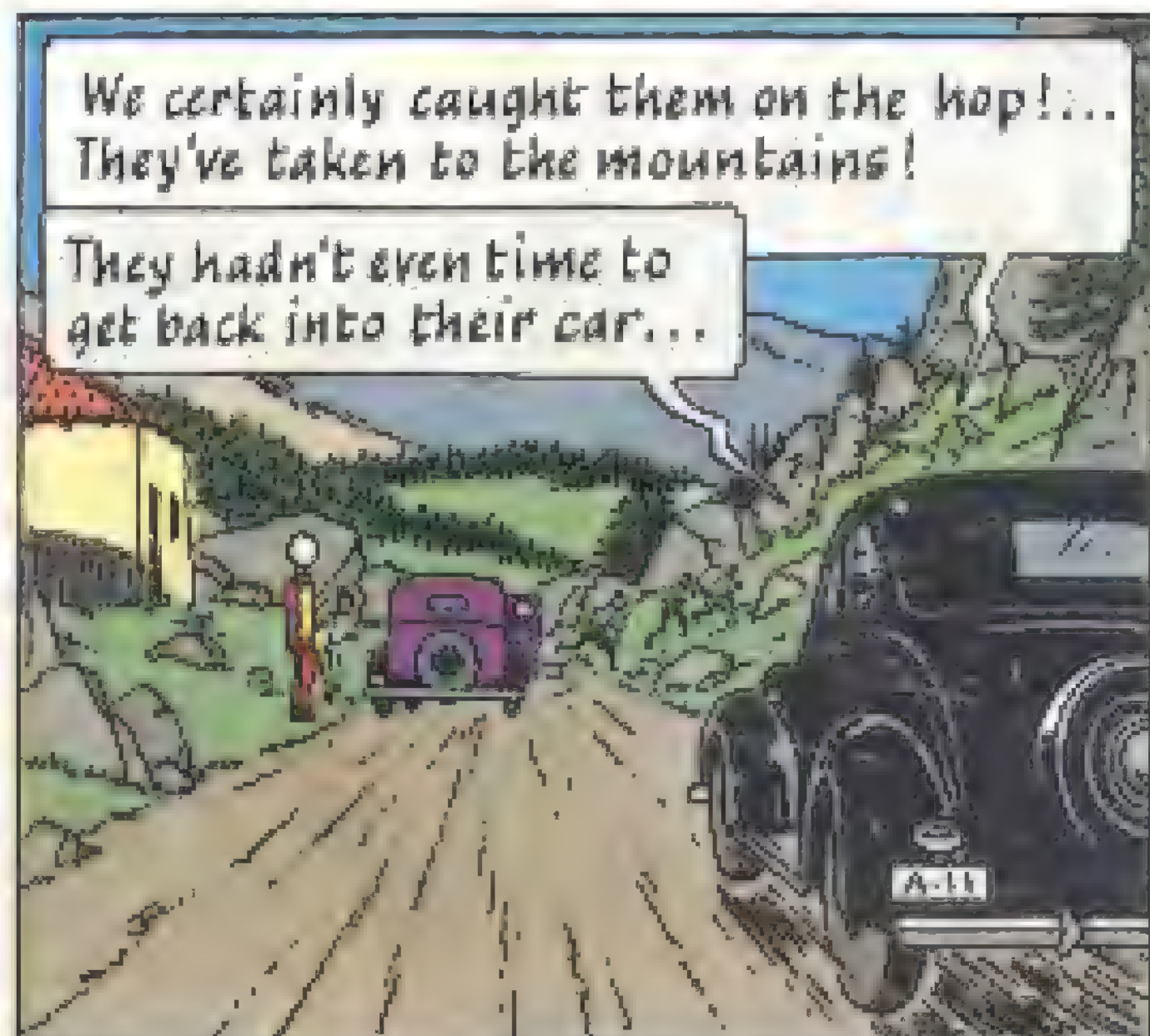


Another twenty miles to the frontier... Good!... In half an hour we shall be clear of Syldavia, and the sceptre will be safe!



The King's car!... They're after us!





We certainly caught them on the hop!...  
They've taken to the mountains!

They hadn't even time to  
get back into their car...

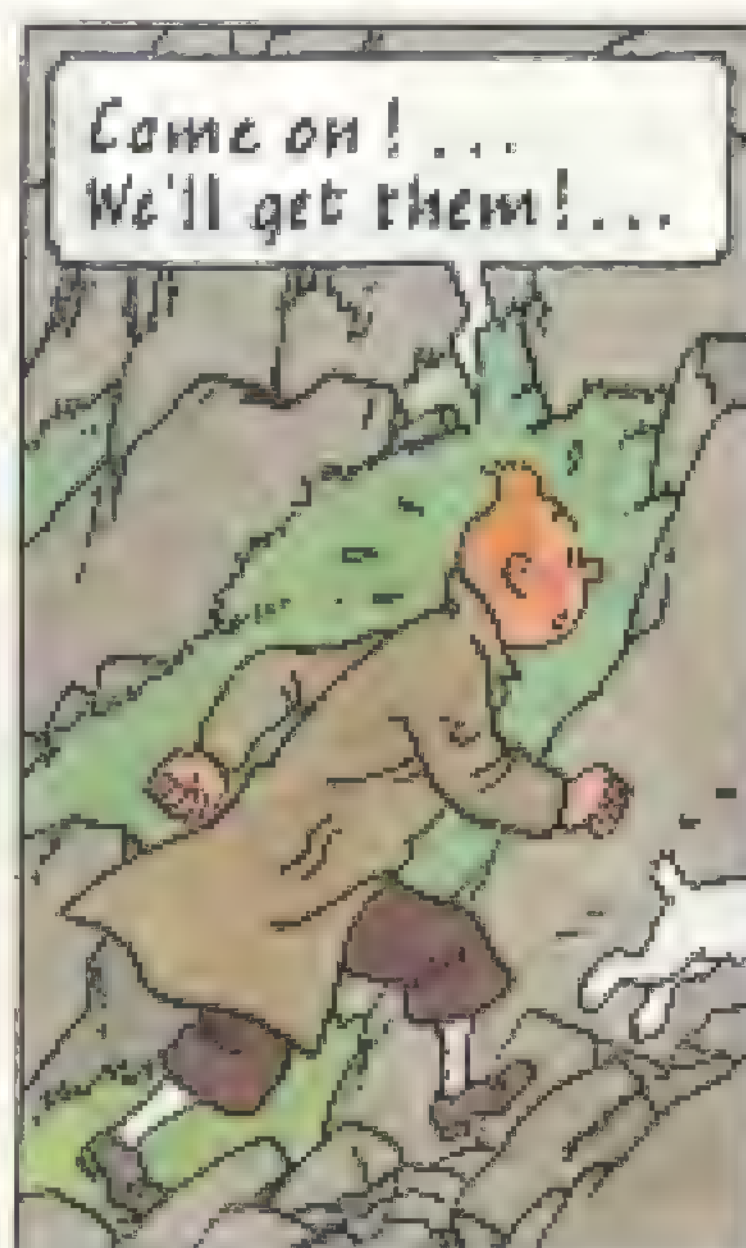


We must hurry!...  
They musn't get  
away!

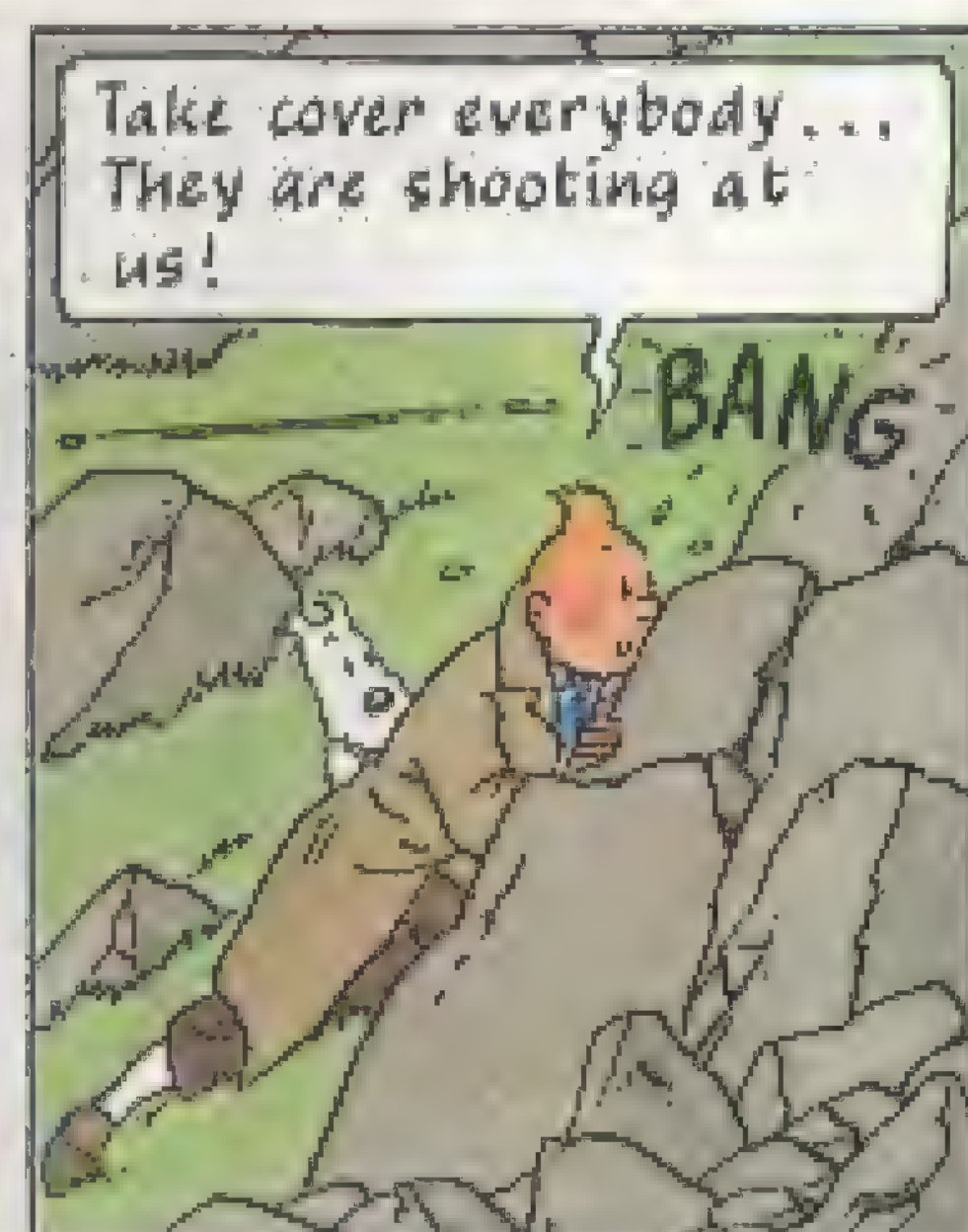


They're still following  
us...

We must stop this!  
... We'll fool them!  
...



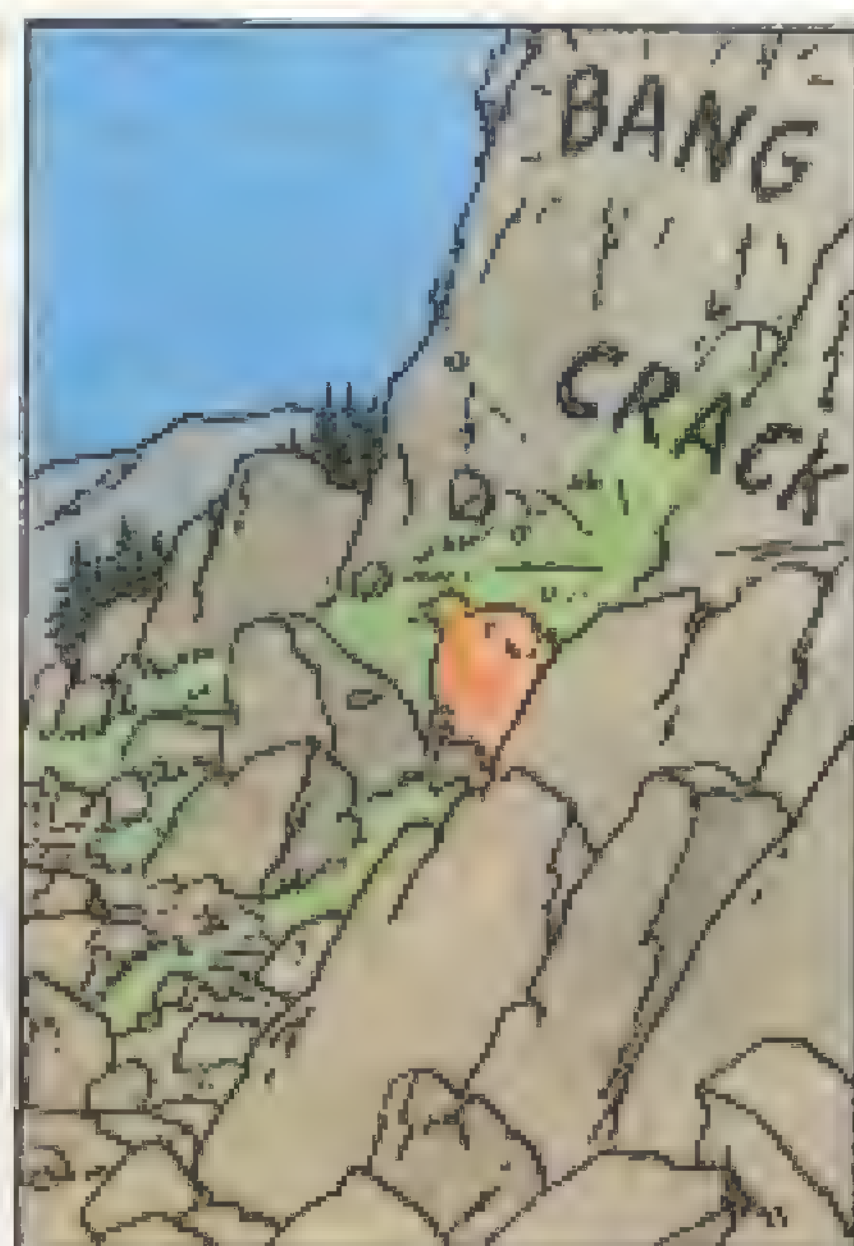
Come on!...  
We'll get them!...



Take cover everybody...  
They are shooting at  
us!



Where have Thomson and  
Thompson got to?... I  
can't see them anywhere.

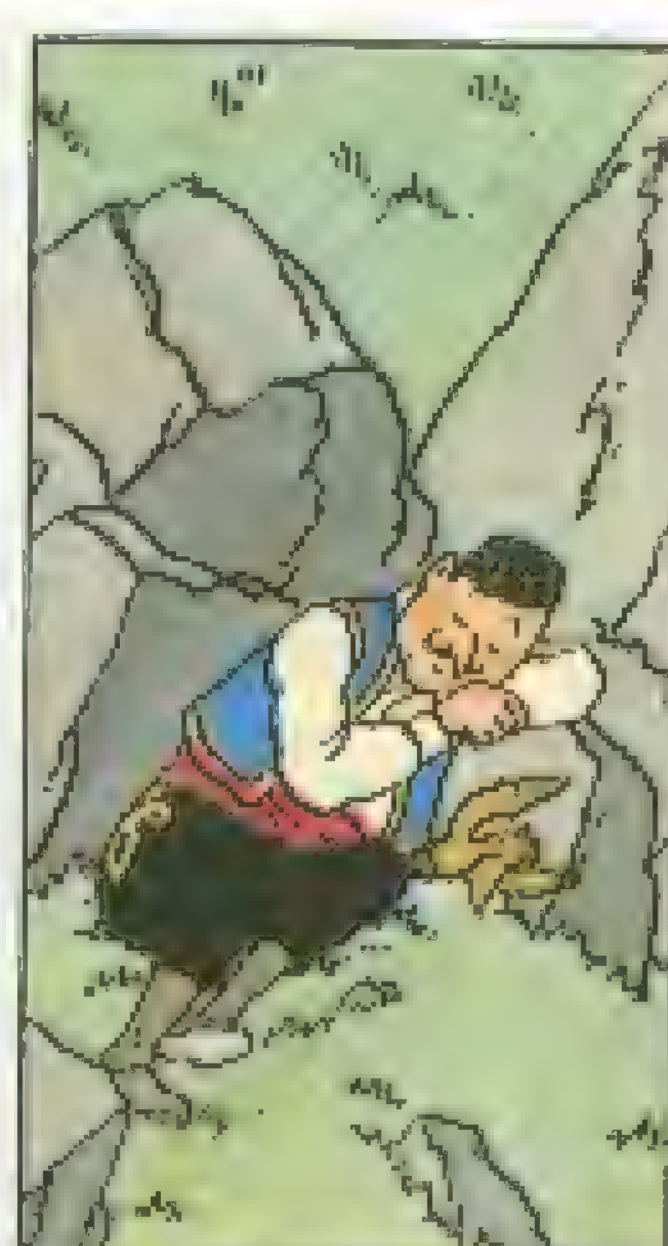
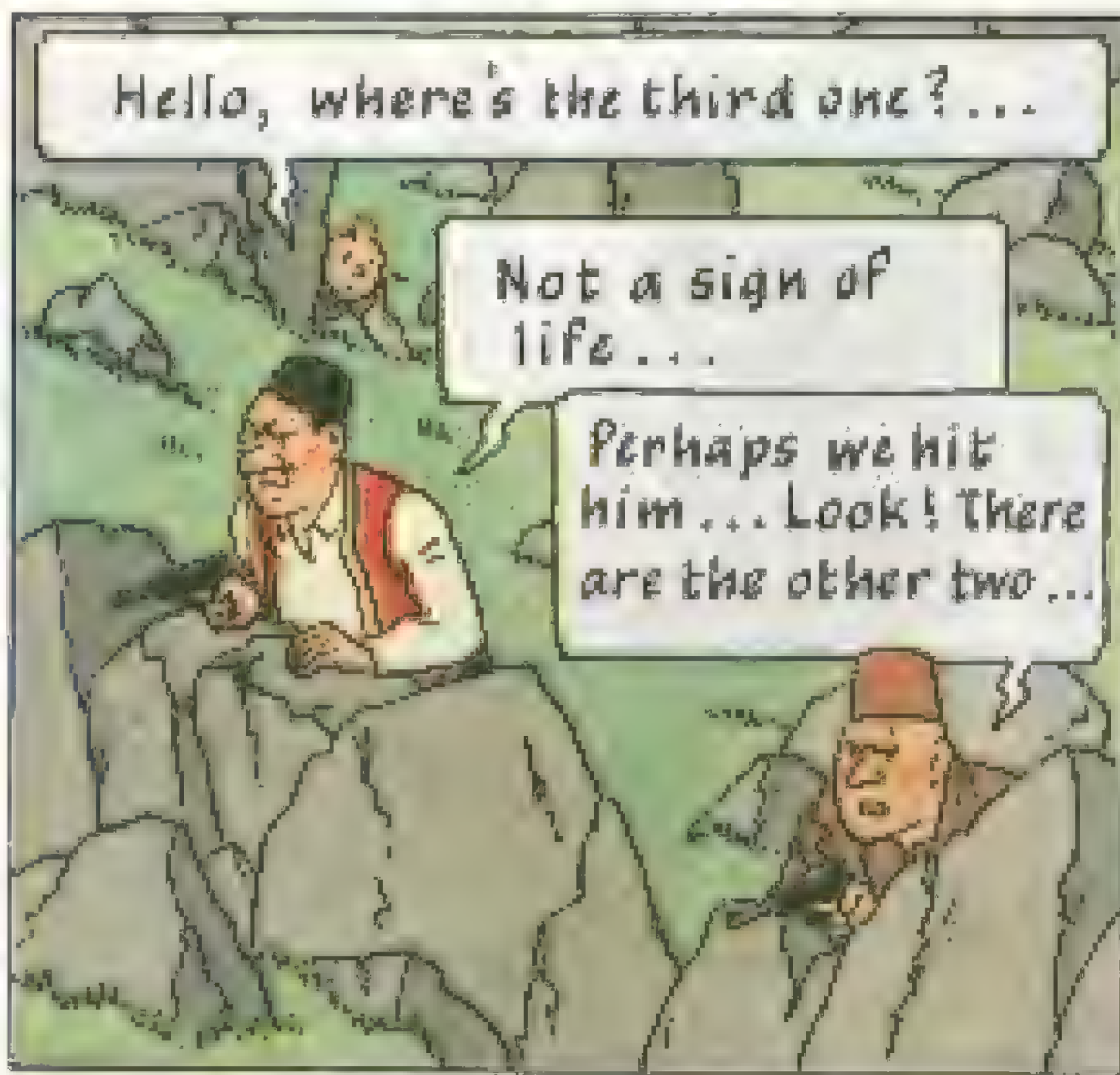


There must be some  
way of catching  
them...

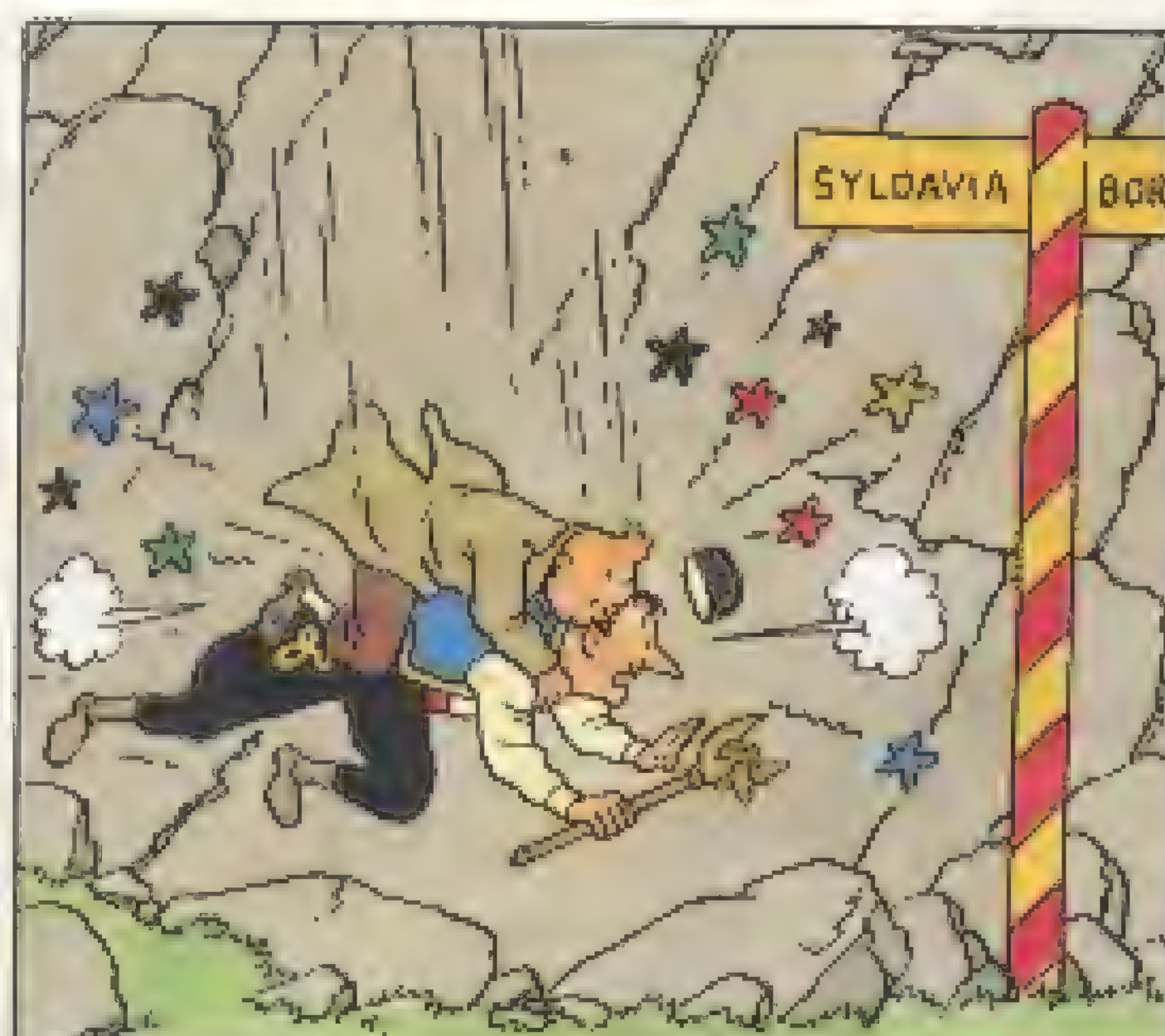
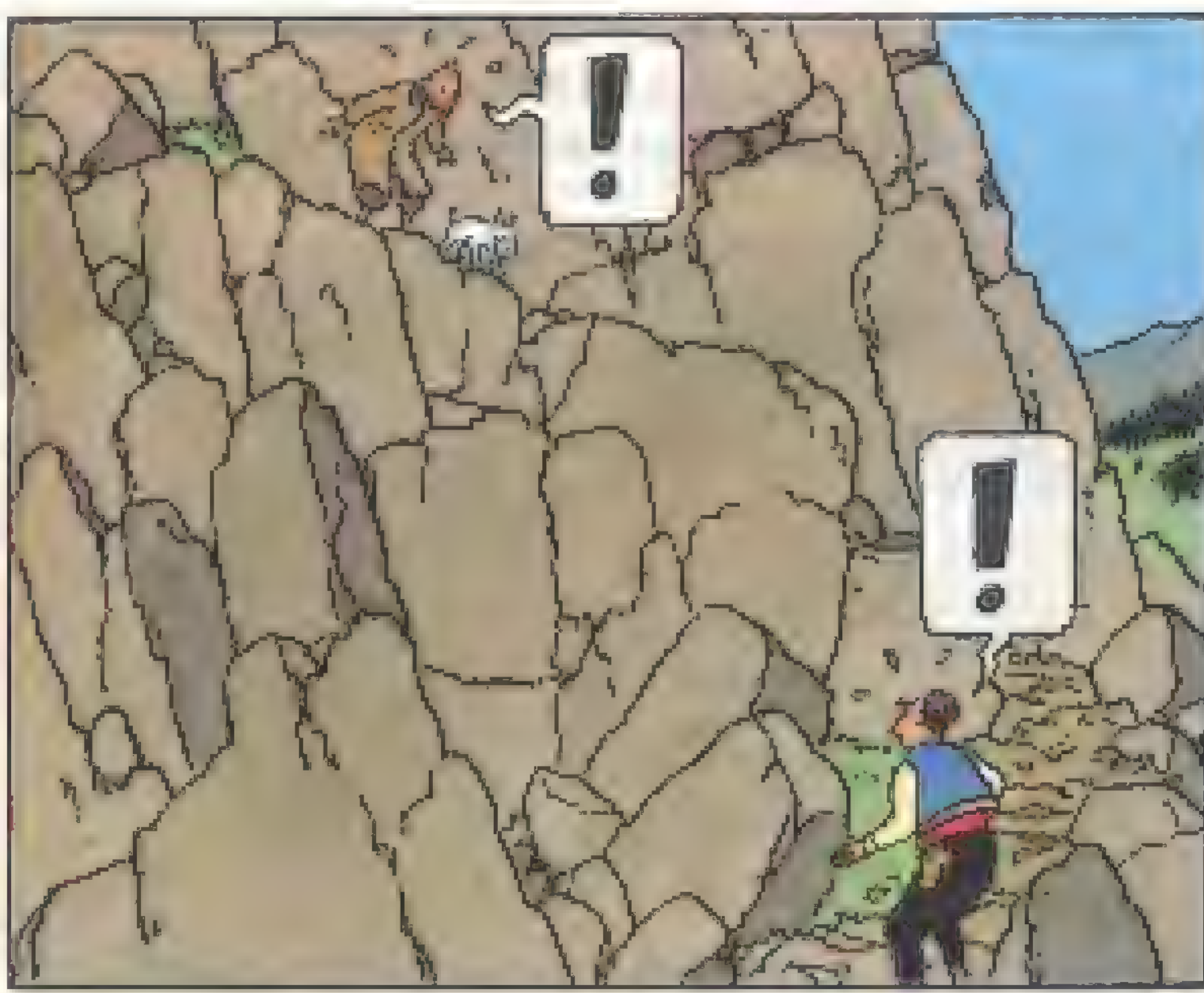


Follow me, Snowy, and don't  
show yourself!... We'll sneak  
round behind them.

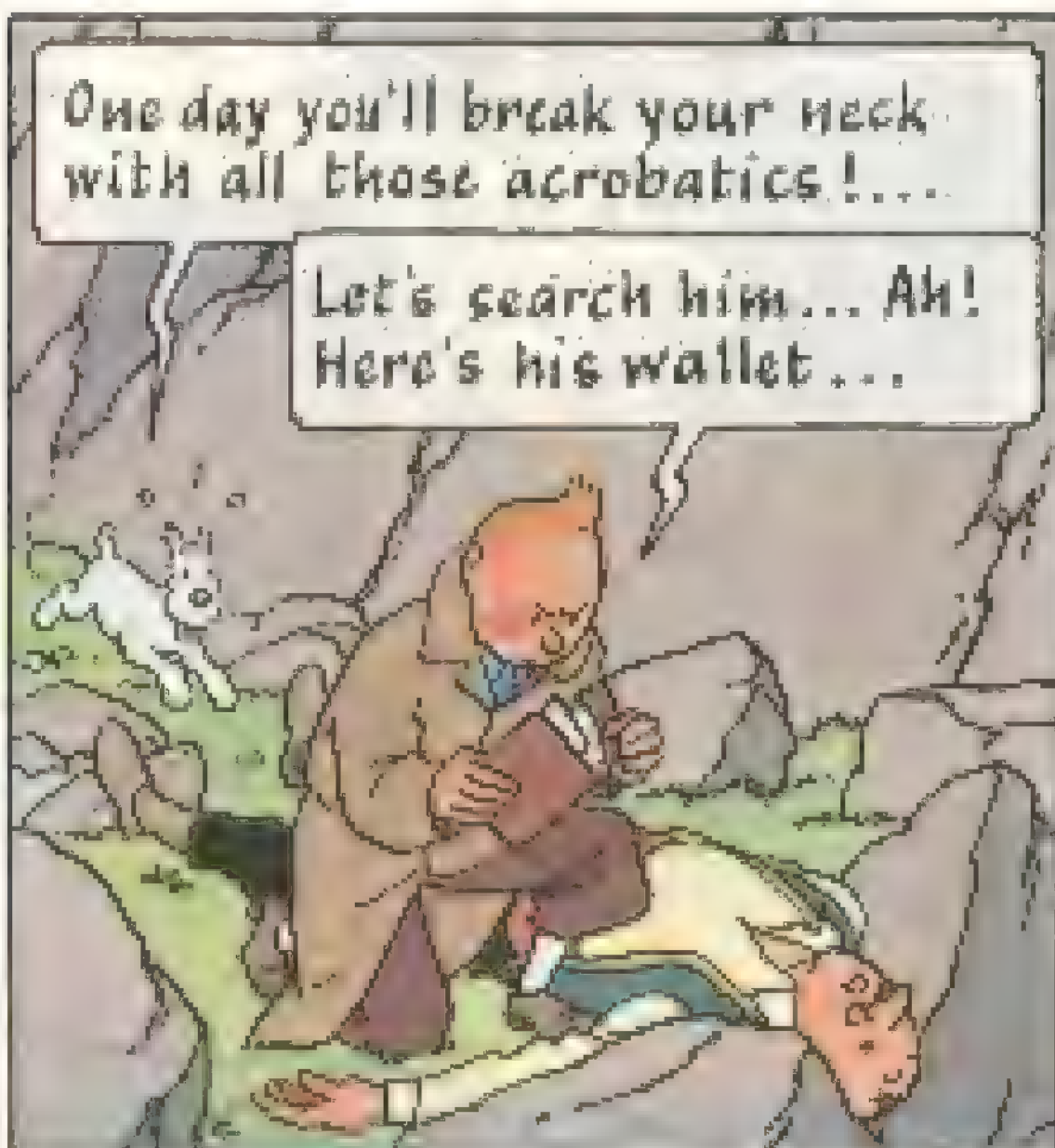












Z.Z.R.K. 1239

**SECRET** To Section Commanders, Shock Troops

**SUBJECT: Seizure of Power**

I wish to draw your attention to the order in which the operations for seizure of power in Syldavia will take place.

On the eve of St. Vladimir's Day, agents in our propaganda units will foment incidents, and arrange for Bordurian nationalists to be beaten up.

On St. Vladimir's Day, at 12 o'clock (24-hour), shock troops will seize Radio Klow, the airport, the gas works and power station, the banks, the general post office, the Royal Palace, Kropow Castle, etc...

In due course, each section commander will receive precise orders concerning his particular mission.

I salute you!

(signed)

Müstler.

Z.Z.R.K. 1240

**SECRET** To Section Commanders, Shock Troops

**SUBJECT: Seizure of Power**

I wish to remind you that I shall broadcast a call to arms when Radio Klow is in our hands.

Musterized Bordurian troops will then cross into Syldavian territory, to free our native land from the tyranny of King Muskar XII.

Following the feeble resistance they may meet with from a few fanatical royalist partisans and certain subversive sections of the populace, the Bordurian troops will arrive in Klow at about 5.0 p.m.

I call upon all members of Z.Z.R.K. to defend until then, with the last drop of their blood, the positions they will have occupied at midday.

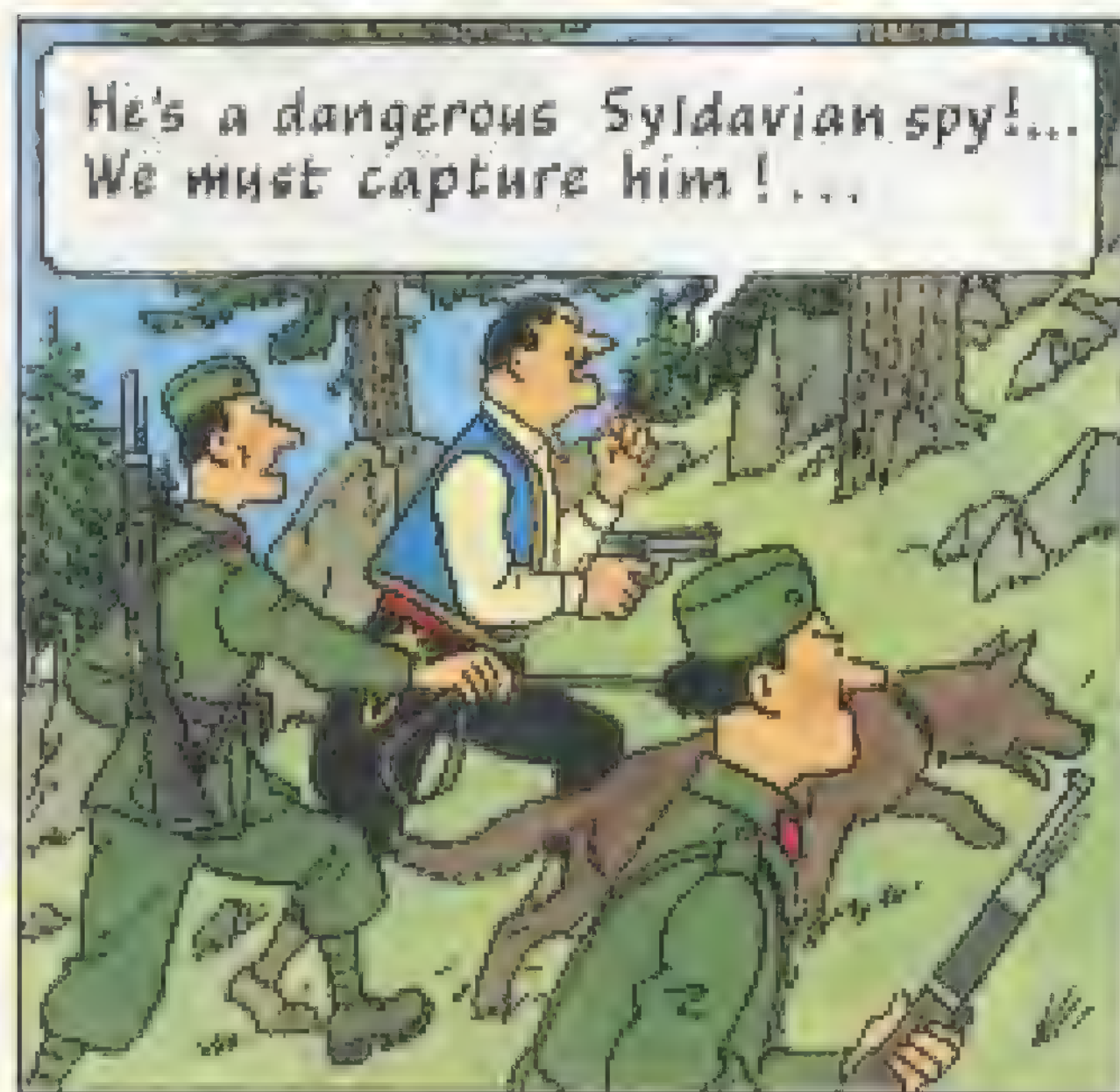
I salute you!

(signed)

Müstler.





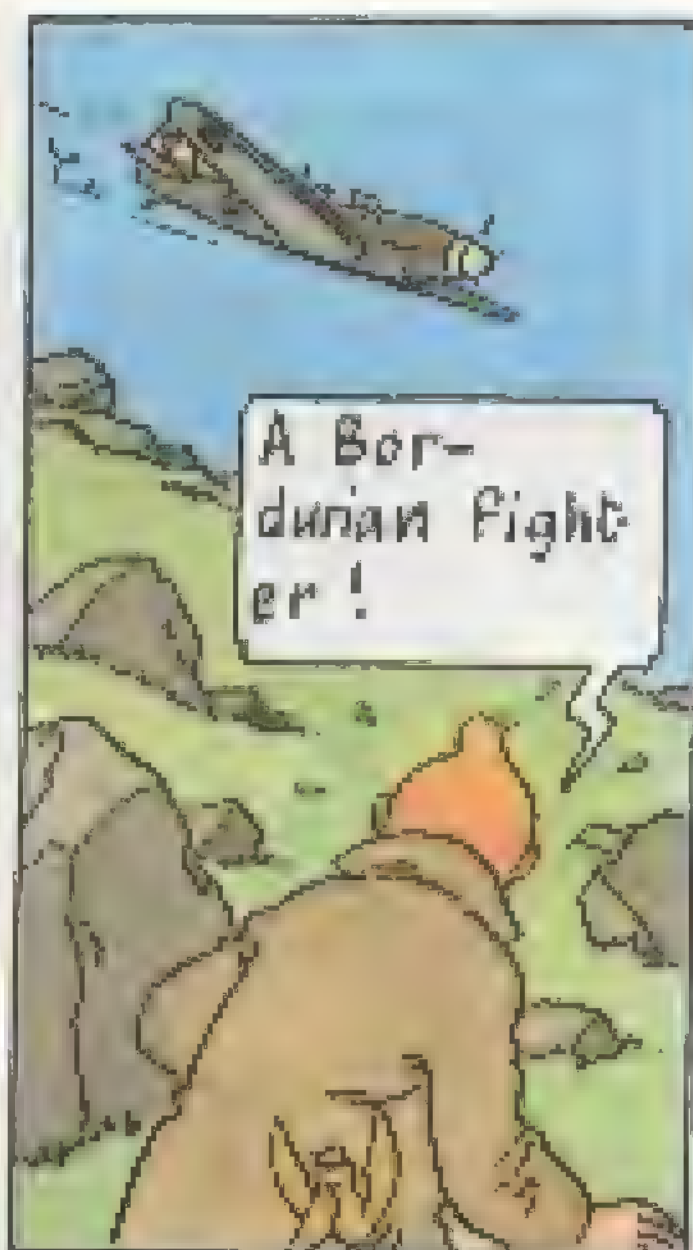


Little devil! He's scattered pepper to put the dog off the scent!



Next day...

That's two nights in the open... I'm tired out!... If I don't find the way soon I'll never get back in time!



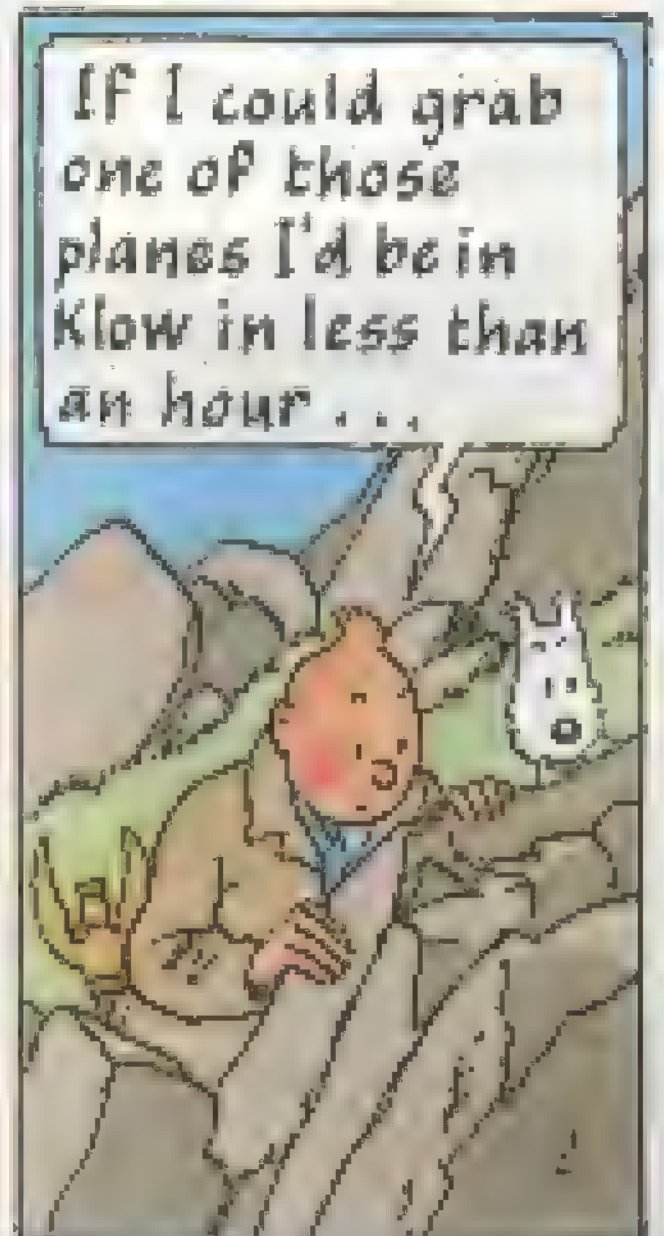
A Bordurian Fighter!



He's lowered his under-carriage... Where's he landing?



?



If I could grab one of those planes I'd be in Klow in less than an hour...



Everything O.K.?

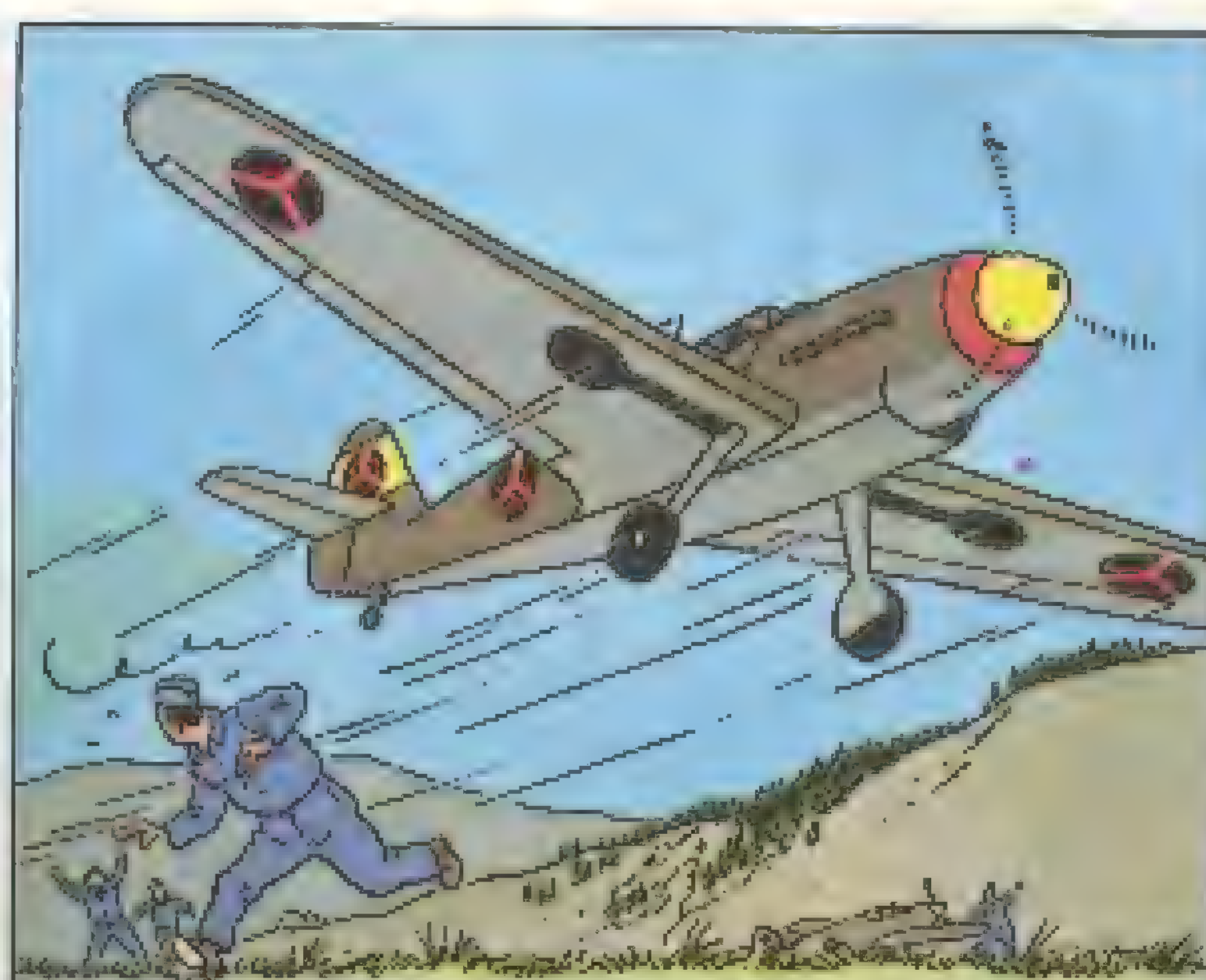
Yes, nothing unusual... just reconnaissance along the frontier.



You know, I've been tipped off that Müssler will give his broadcast at midday tomorrow... And an hour later our squadron will land at Klow.



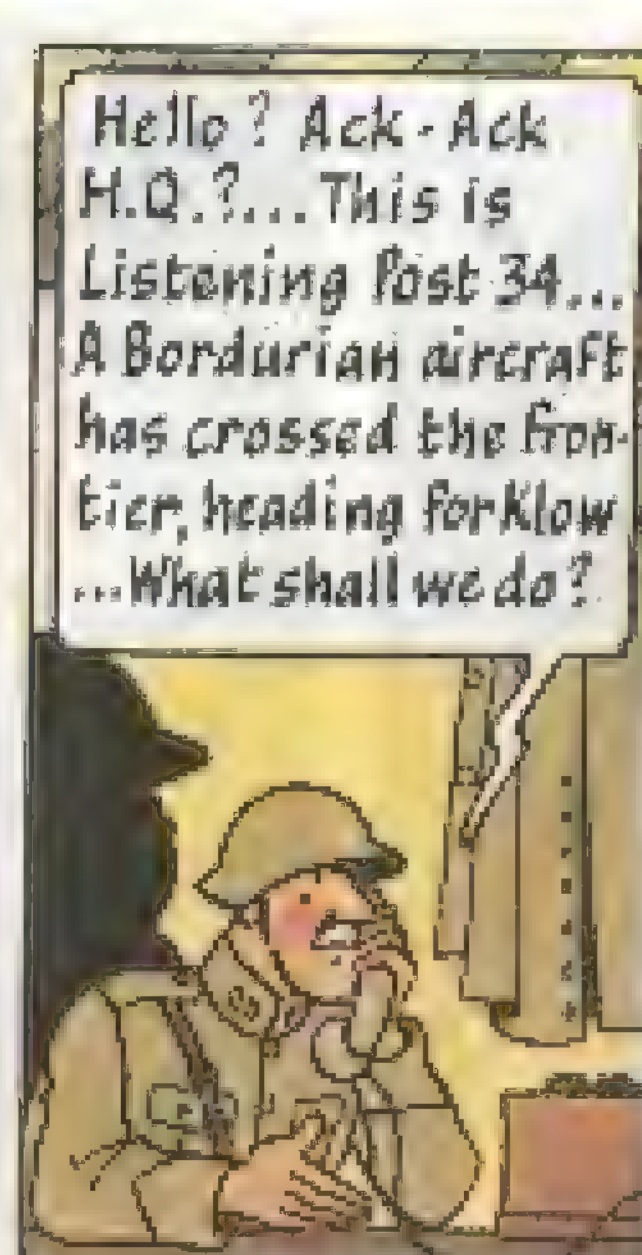
?!★  
★!★



Flat out for Klow!...



It's getting dark... That's annoying. I shan't be there before nightfall...



Hello? Ack-Ack H.Q.?... This is Listening Post 34... A Bordurian aircraft has crossed the frontier, heading for Klow... What shall we do?



You have your orders, Lieutenant. Shoot it down!...









Ah, a signpost!... That's a stroke of luck!



Sixteen miles: that's five hours' walk!...

A mere trifle!

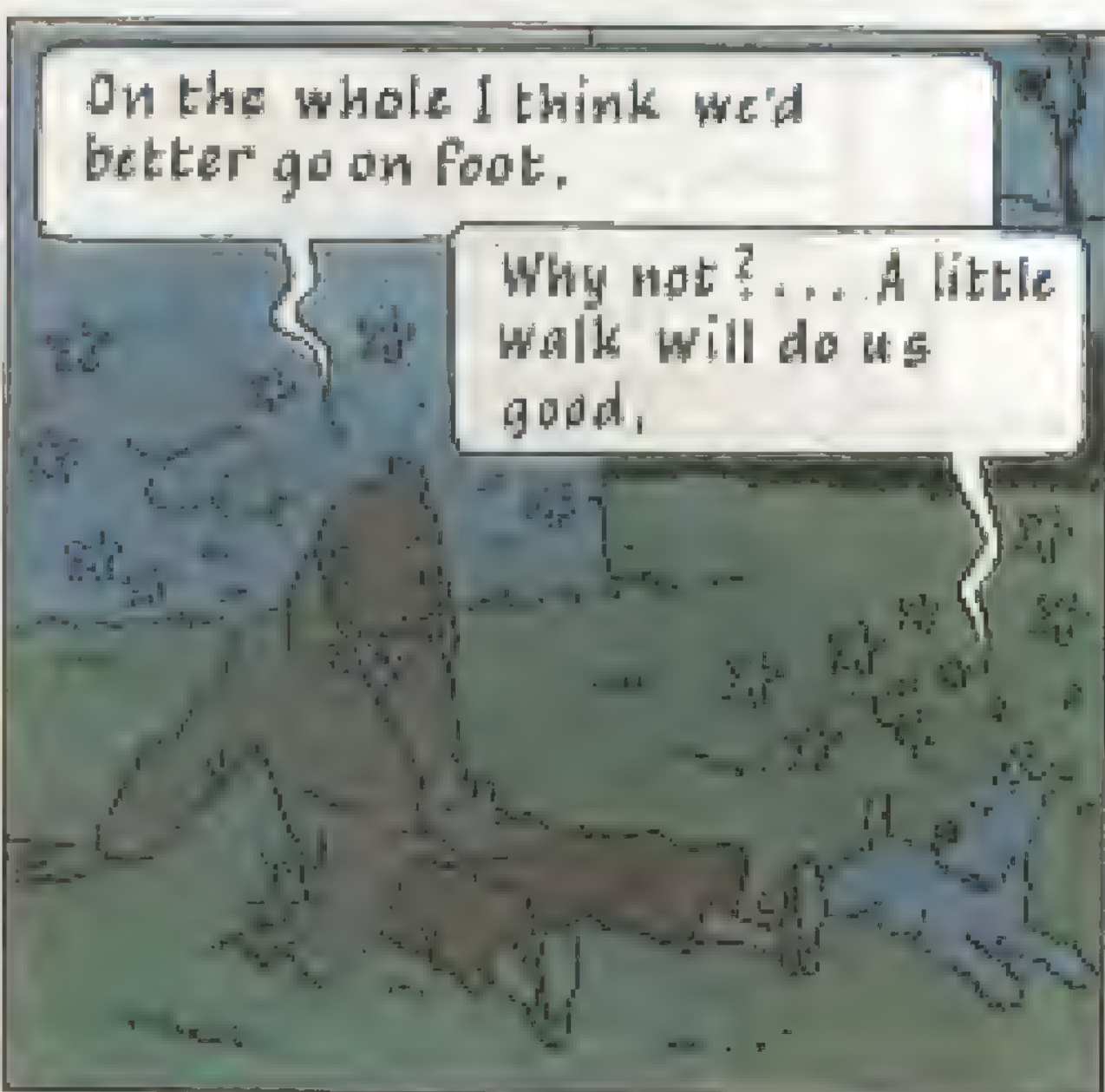
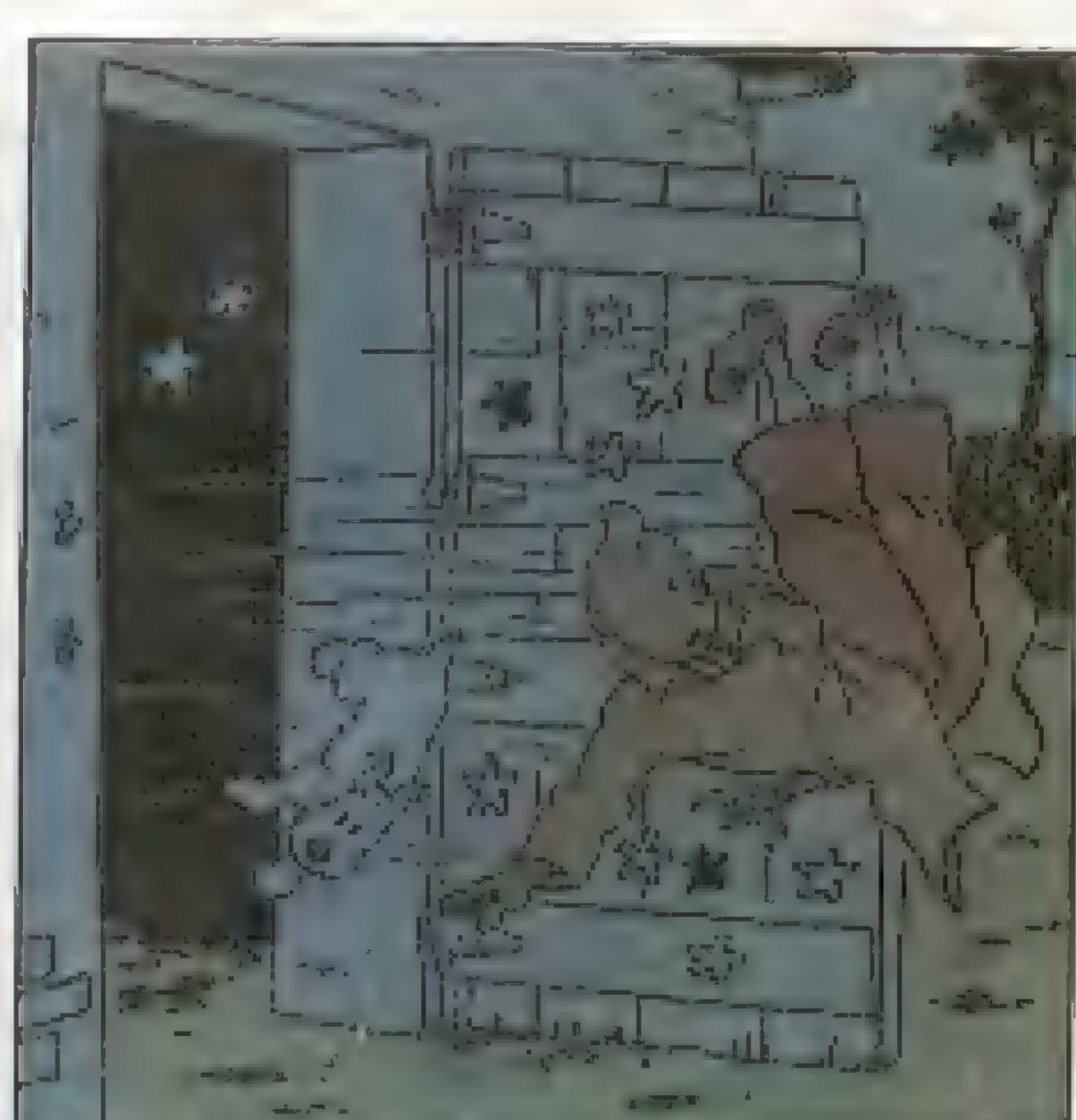


A farm!... Stables!... If only I could borrow a horse...

That's a splendid idea!

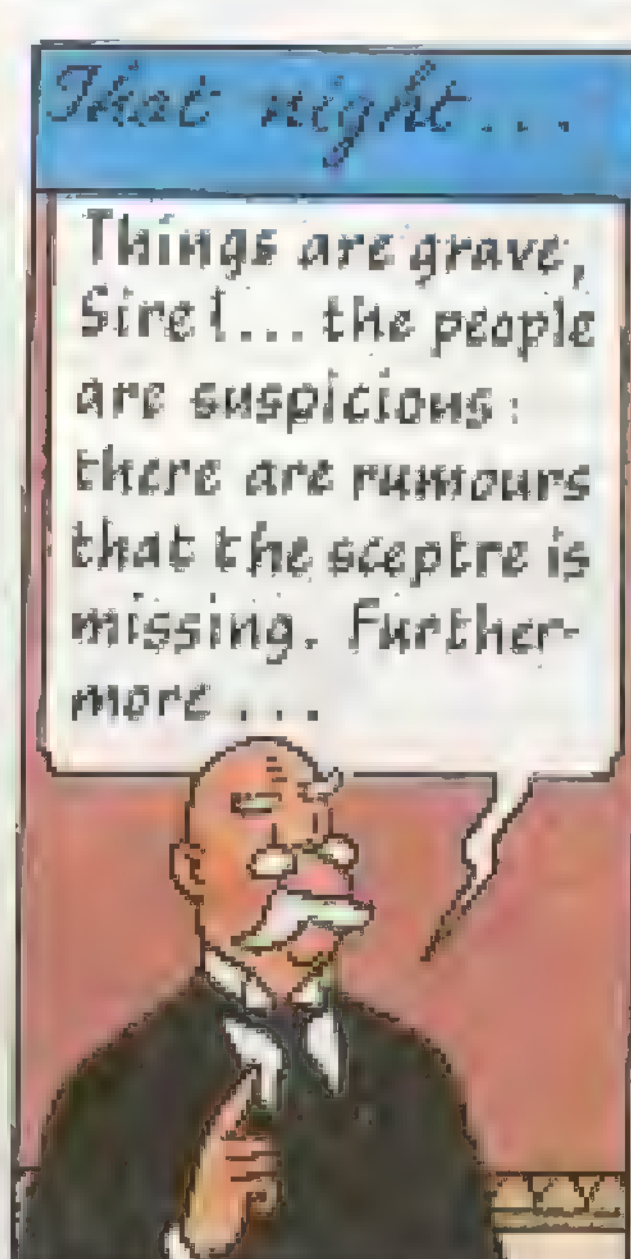


Aha, here's a horse!... Whoa there!... Good, here's a saddle too... Whoa now! Gently does it...



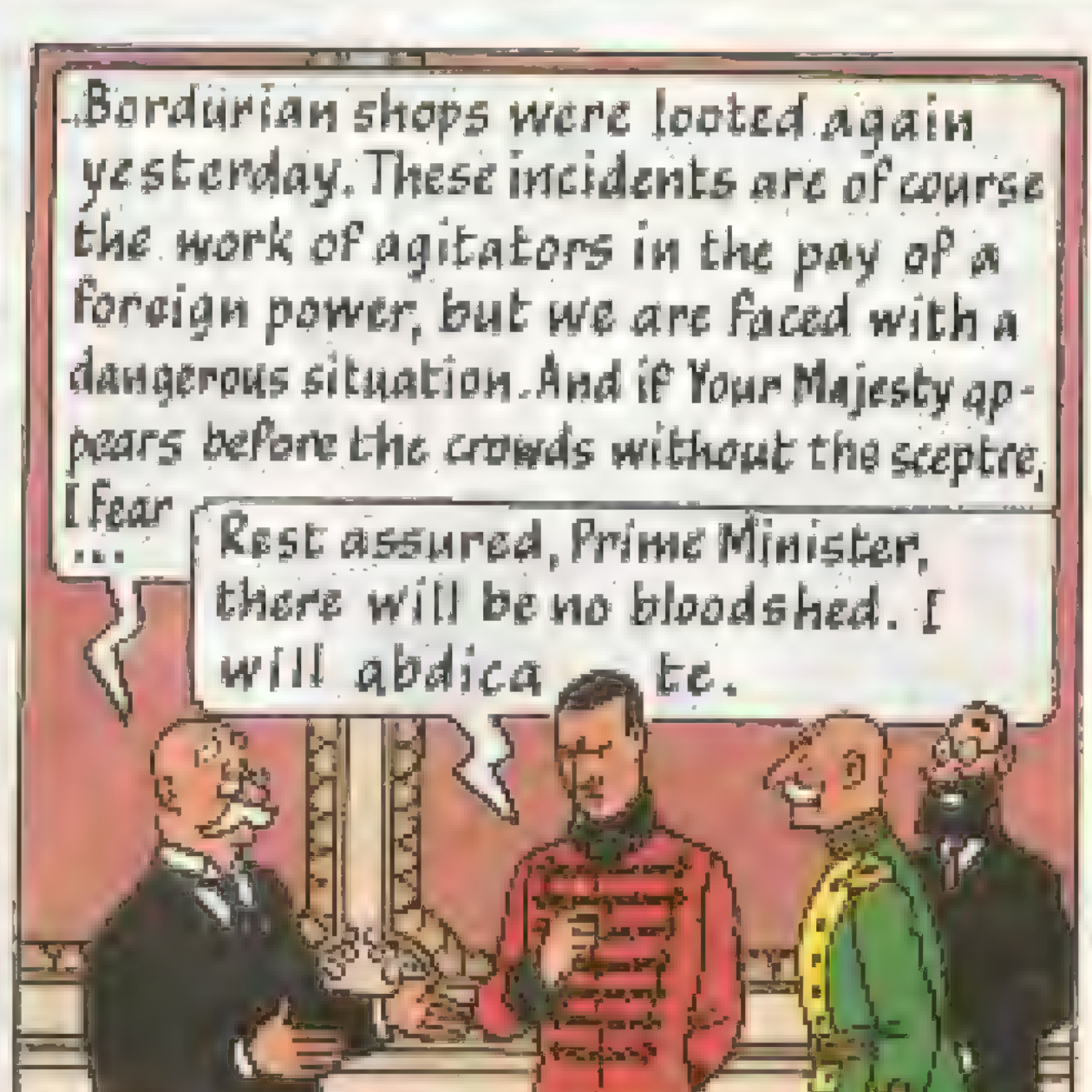
On the whole I think we'd better go on foot.

Why not? ... A little walk will do us good.



That night...

Things are grave, Sir!... the people are suspicious: there are rumours that the sceptre is missing. Furthermore...



Bordurian shops were looted again yesterday. These incidents are of course the work of agitators in the pay of a foreign power, but we are faced with a dangerous situation. And if Your Majesty appears before the crowds without the sceptre, I fear...

Rest assured, Prime Minister, there will be no bloodshed. I will abdicate.



No, Sir, you will not abdicate...

TINTIN!



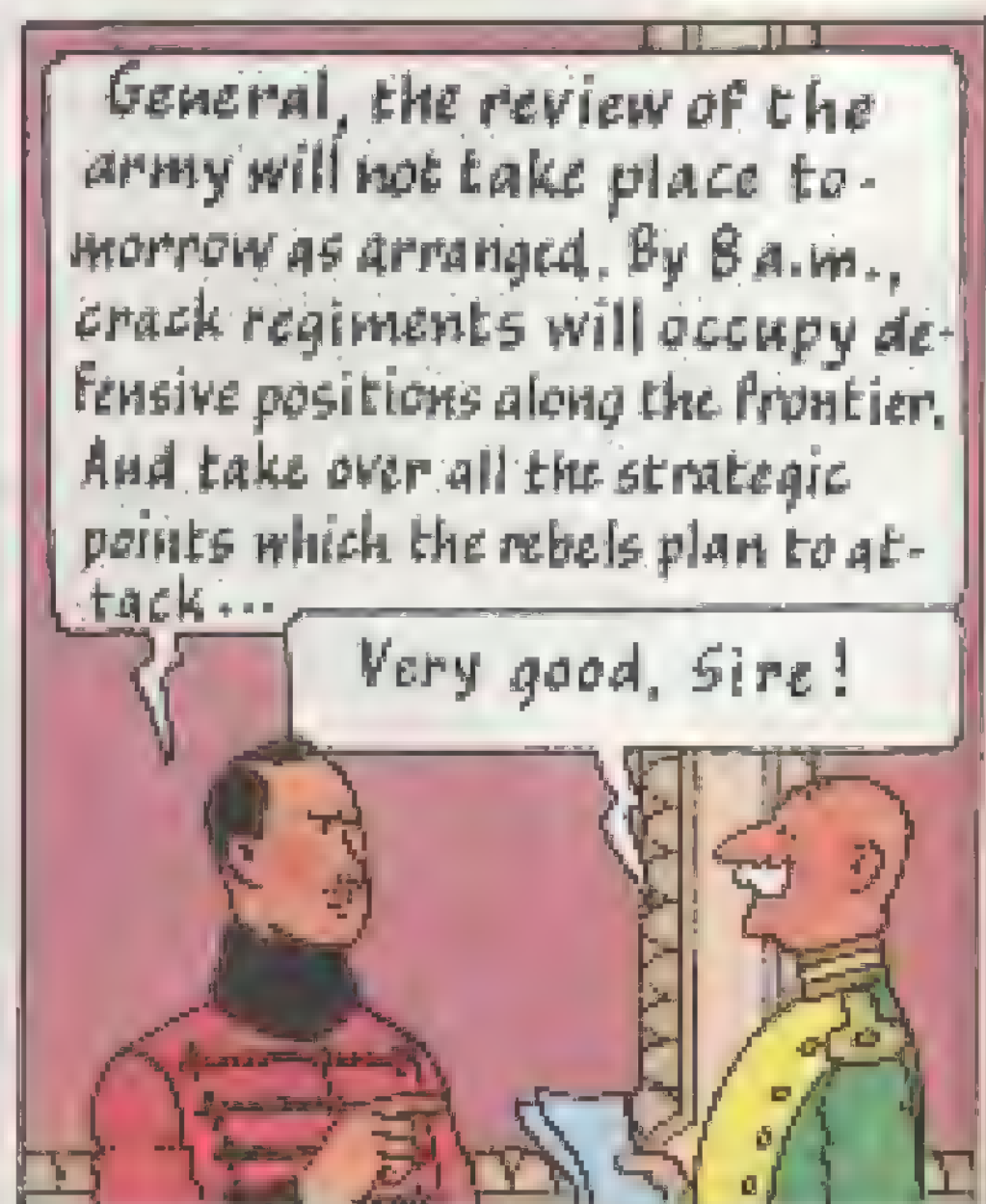
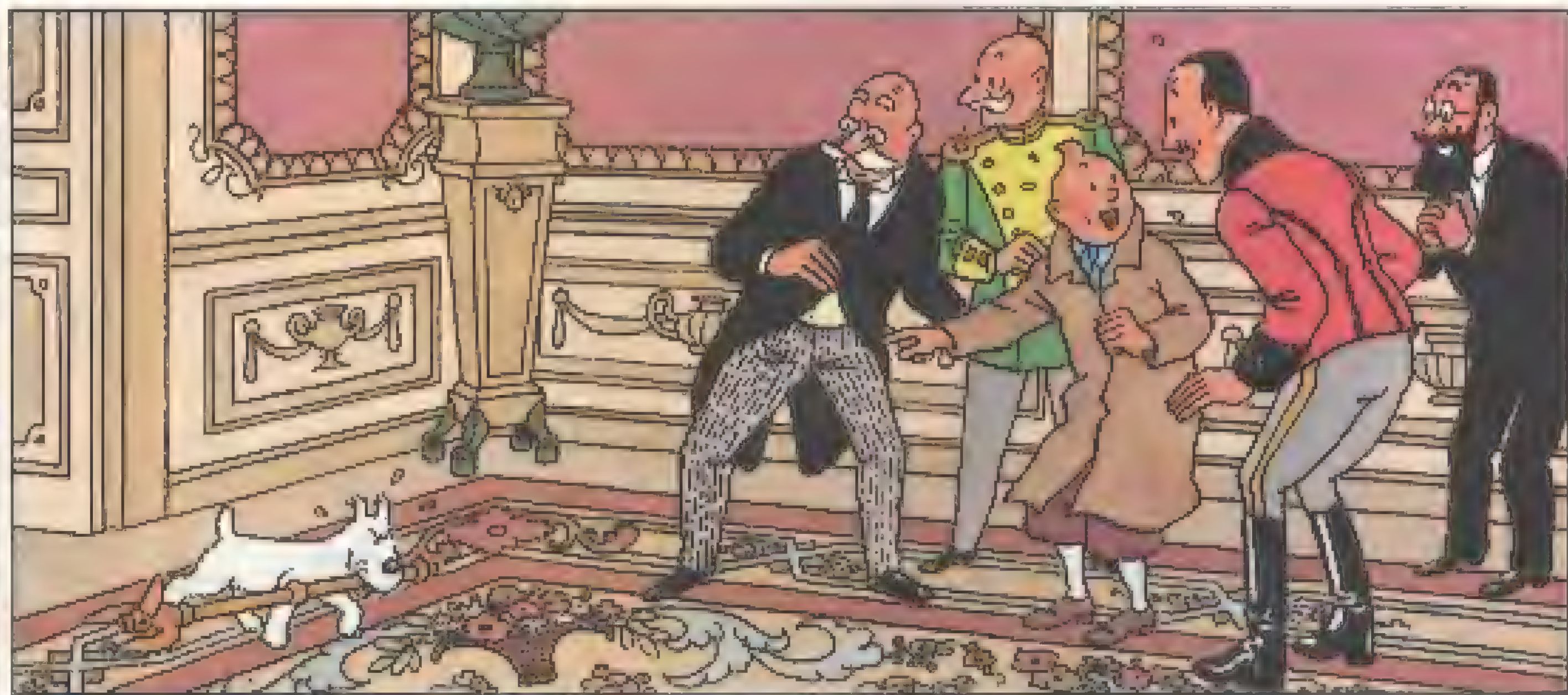
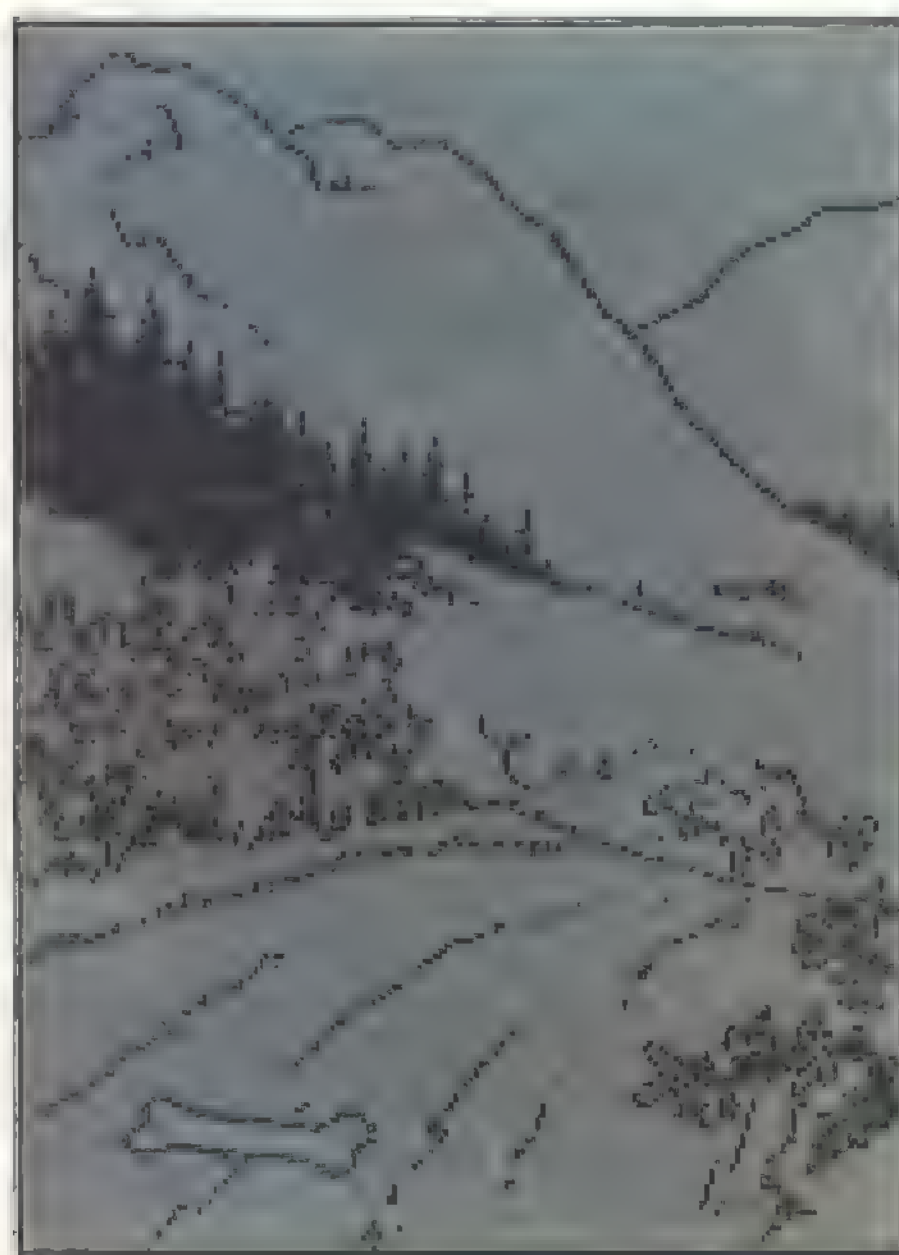
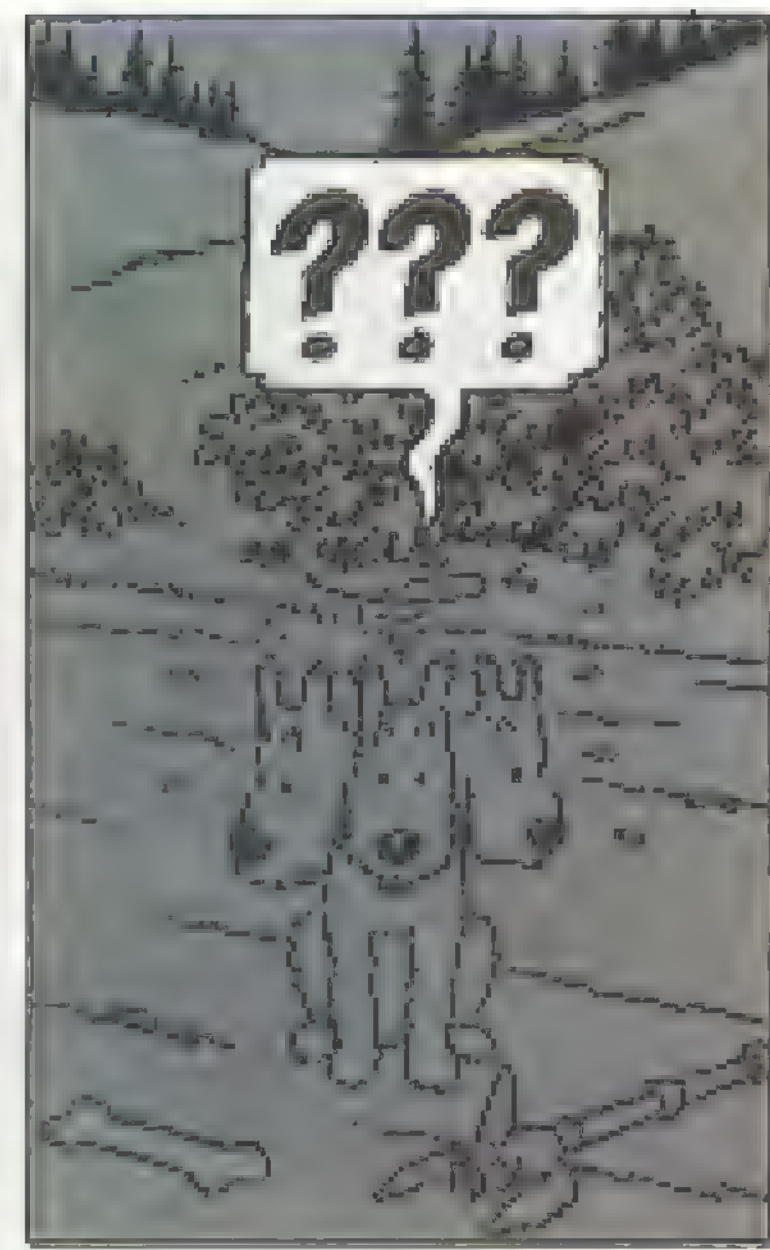
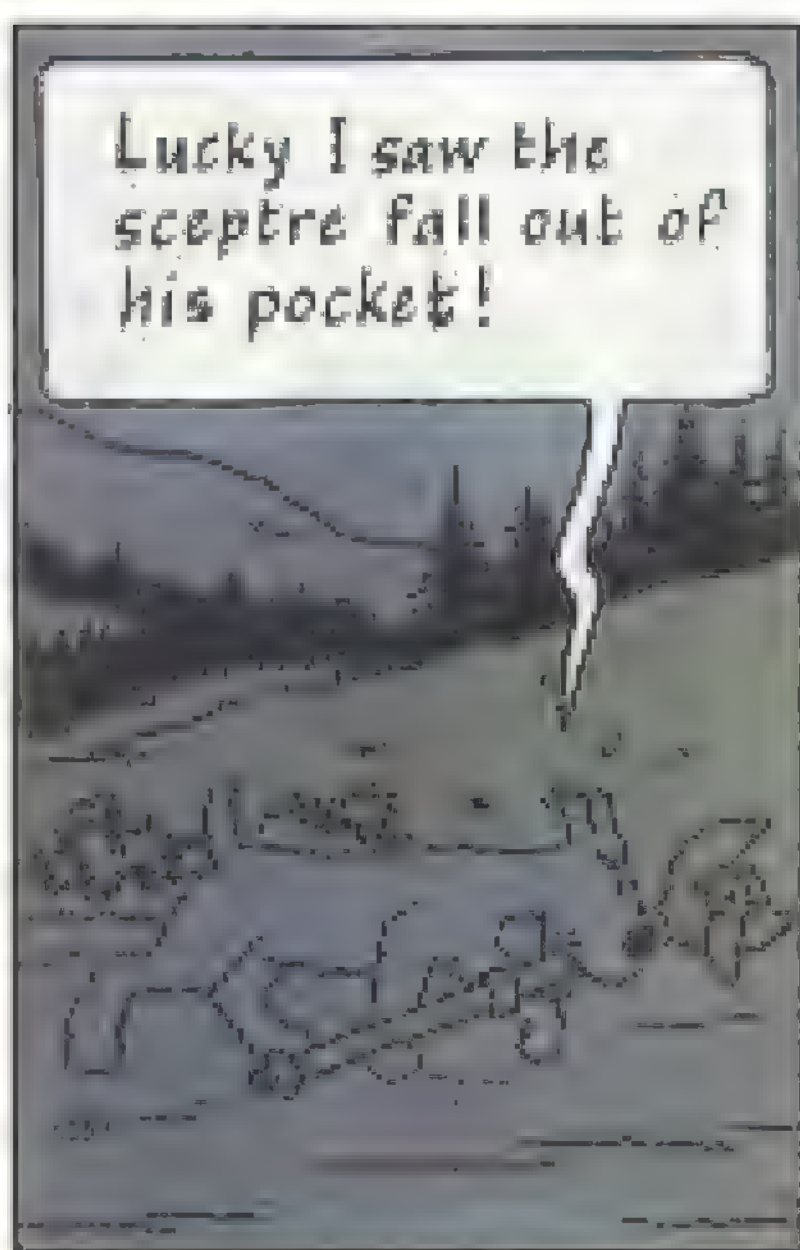
Your Majesty, I have your sceptre with me now!

Saved!

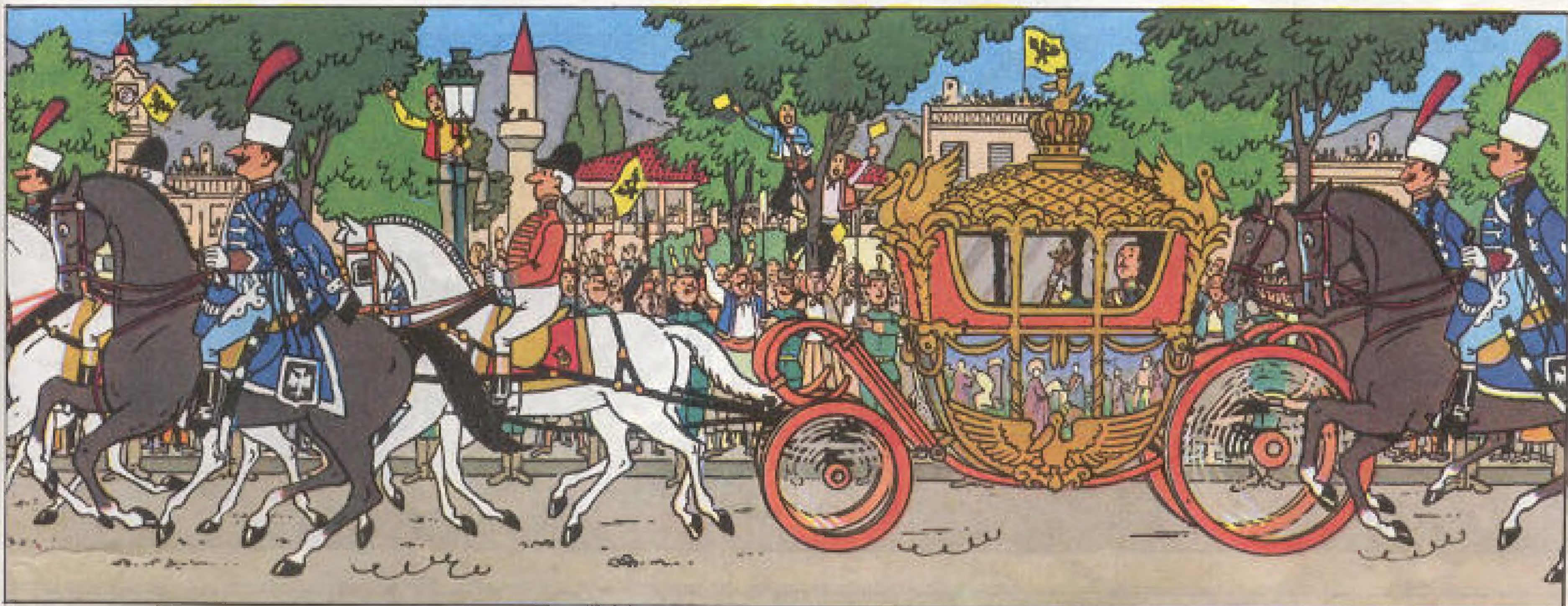
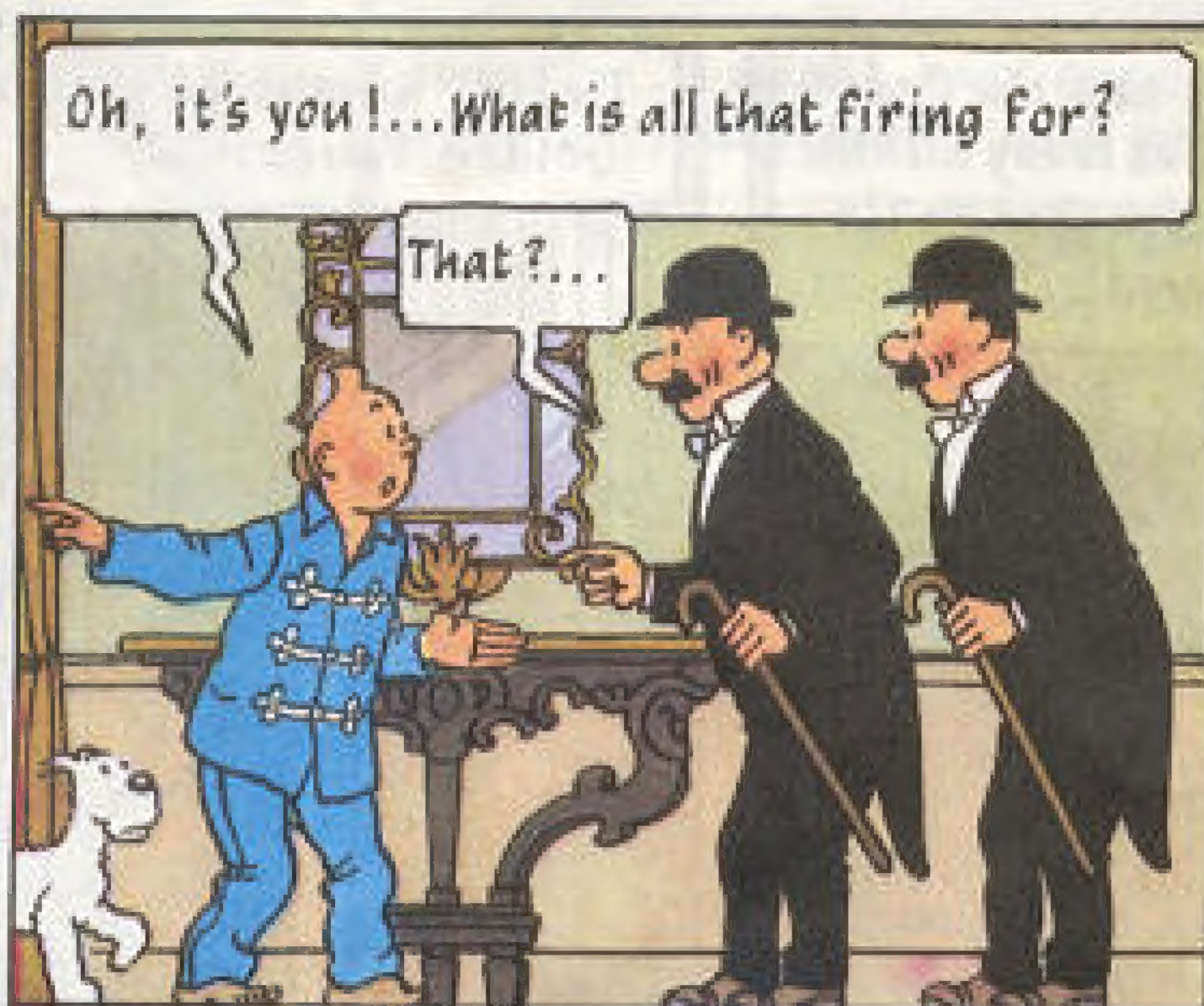


Here it is!... I... Great snakes! I've lost it on the way!

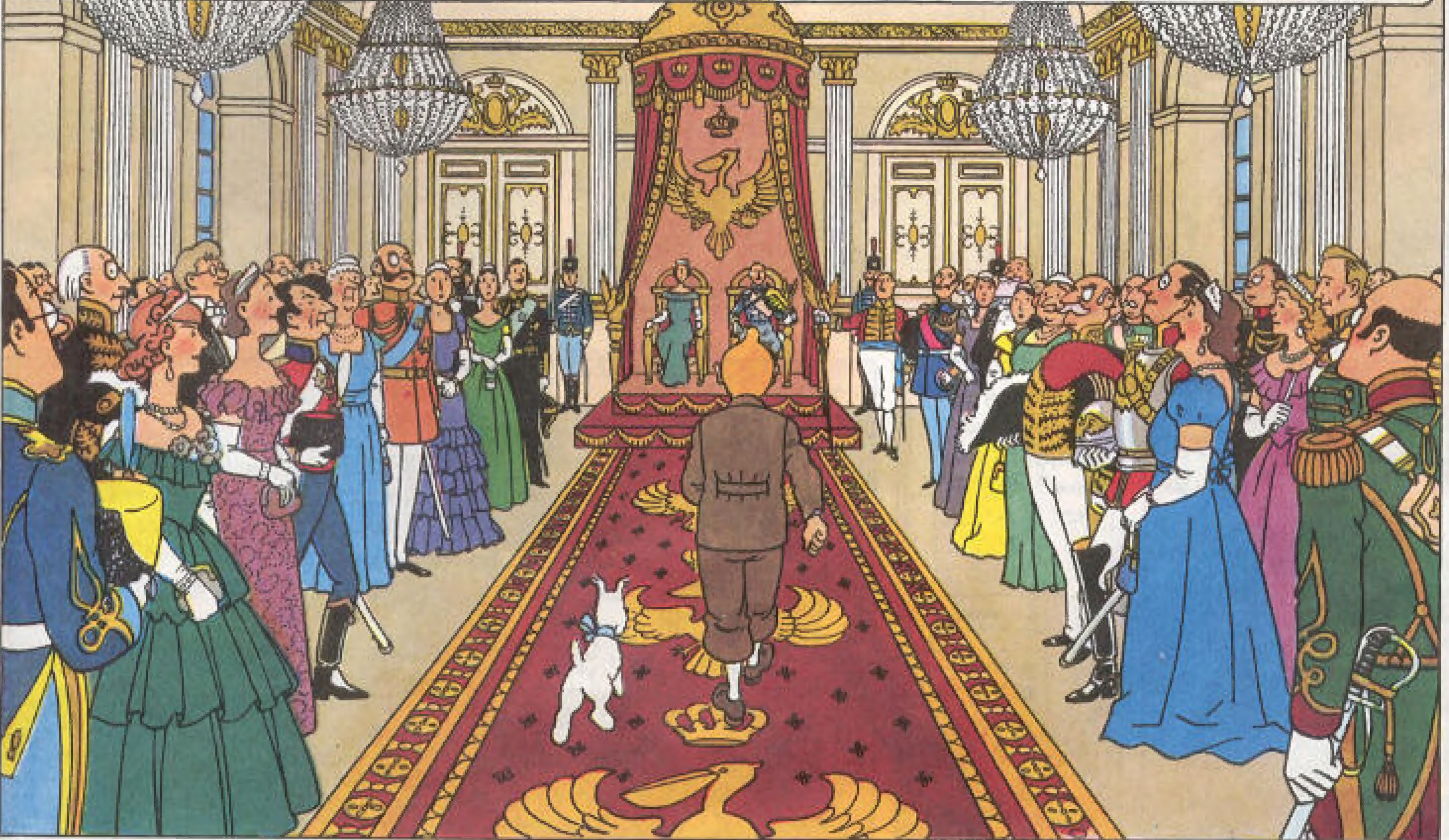






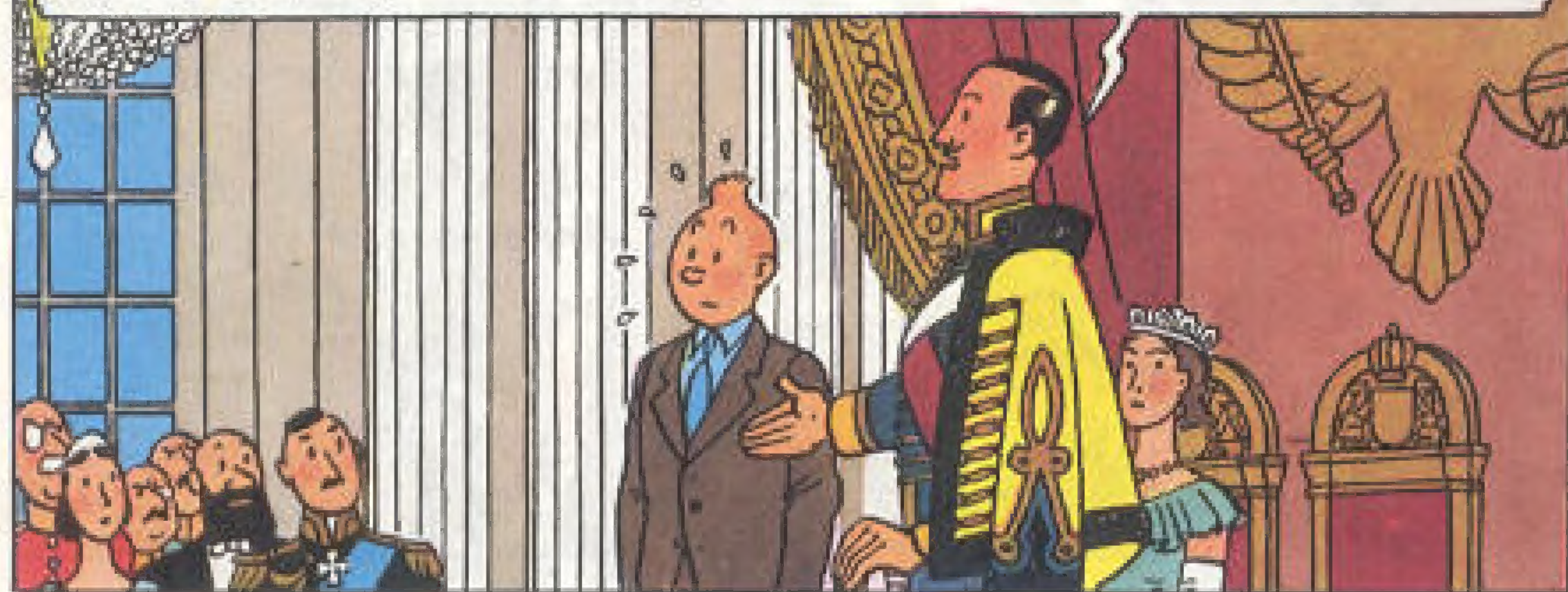


And now the King is once more in his palace. Time and again the delirious crowds have called His Majesty back on to the balcony to receive their tumultuous acclaim. But now he is seated here in the Throne Room, where an investiture is taking place...

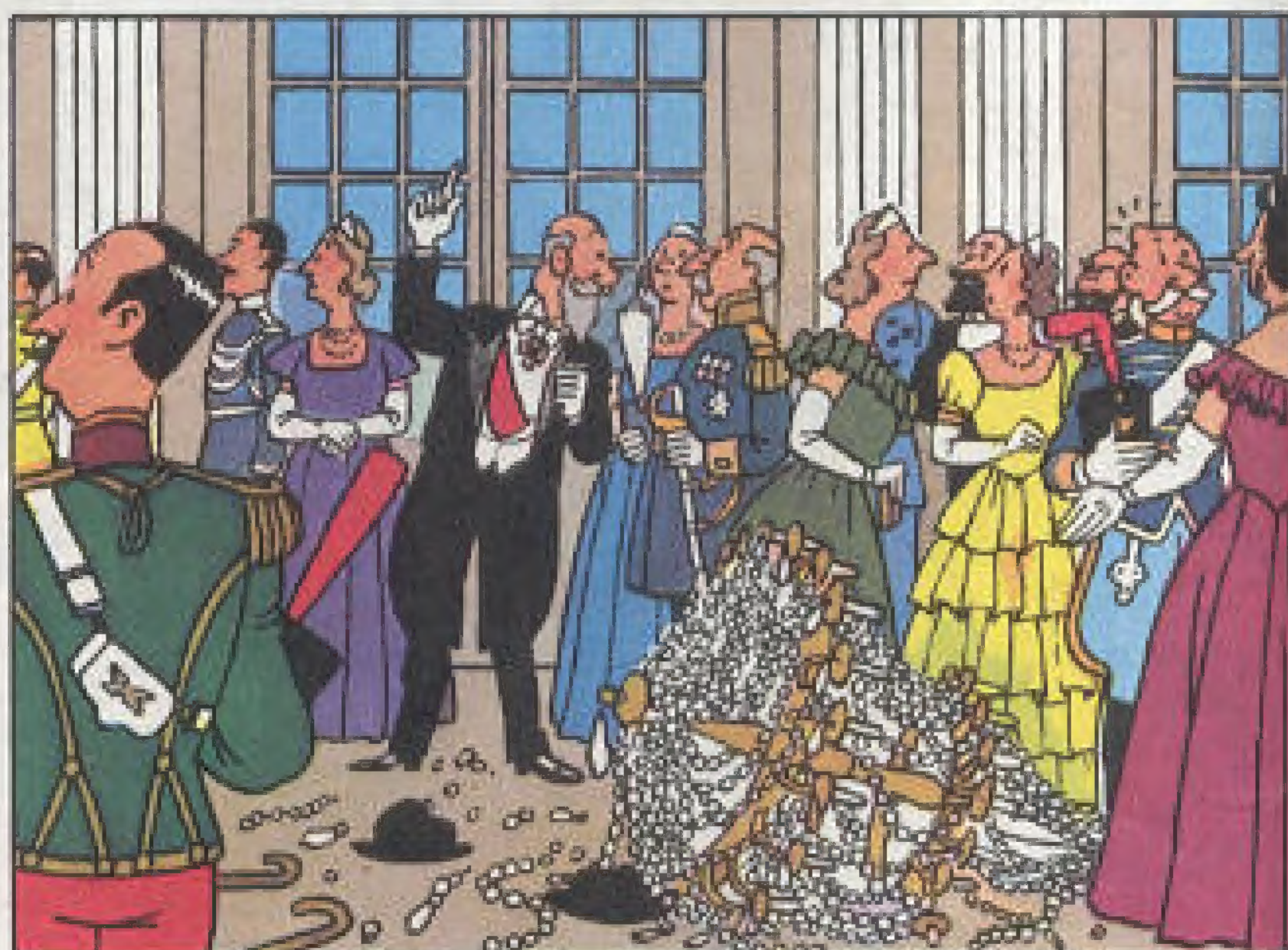
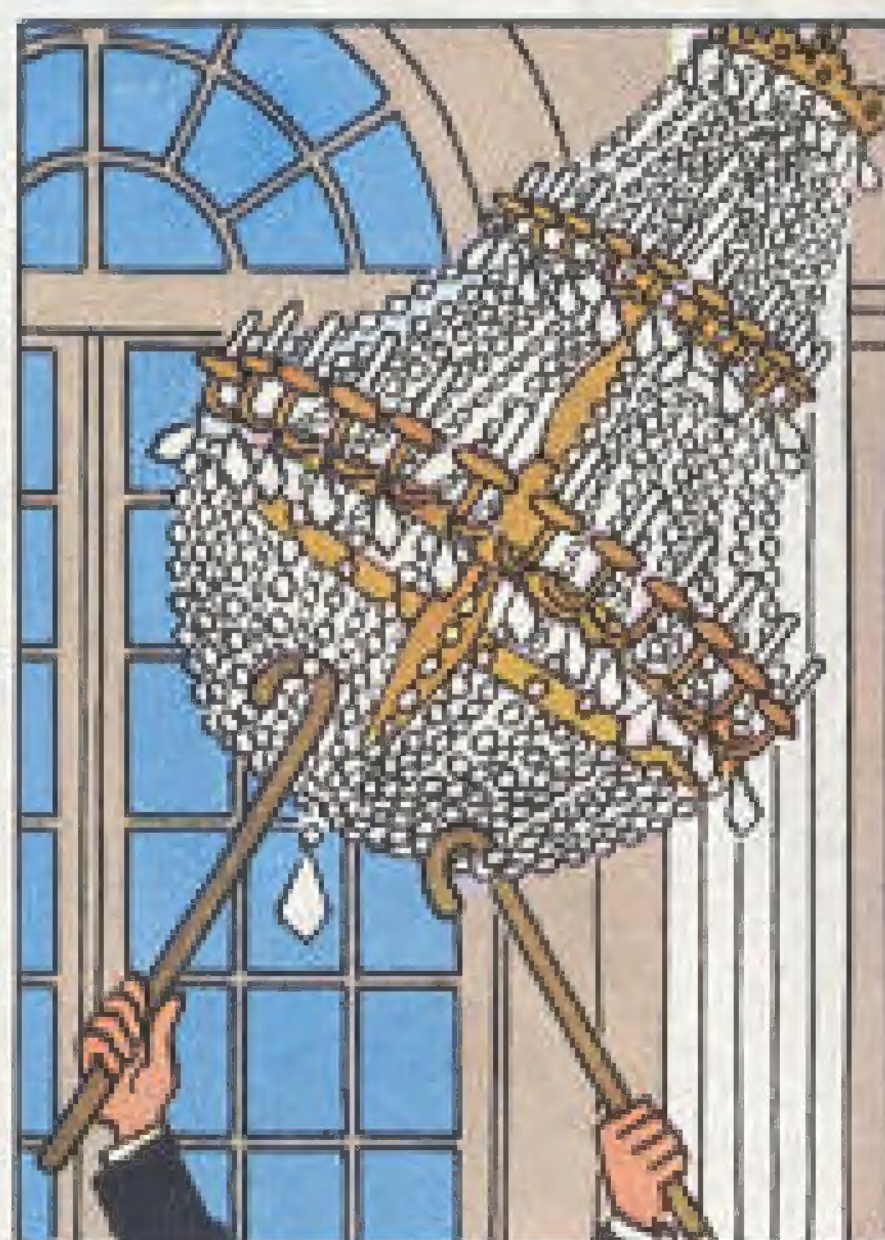
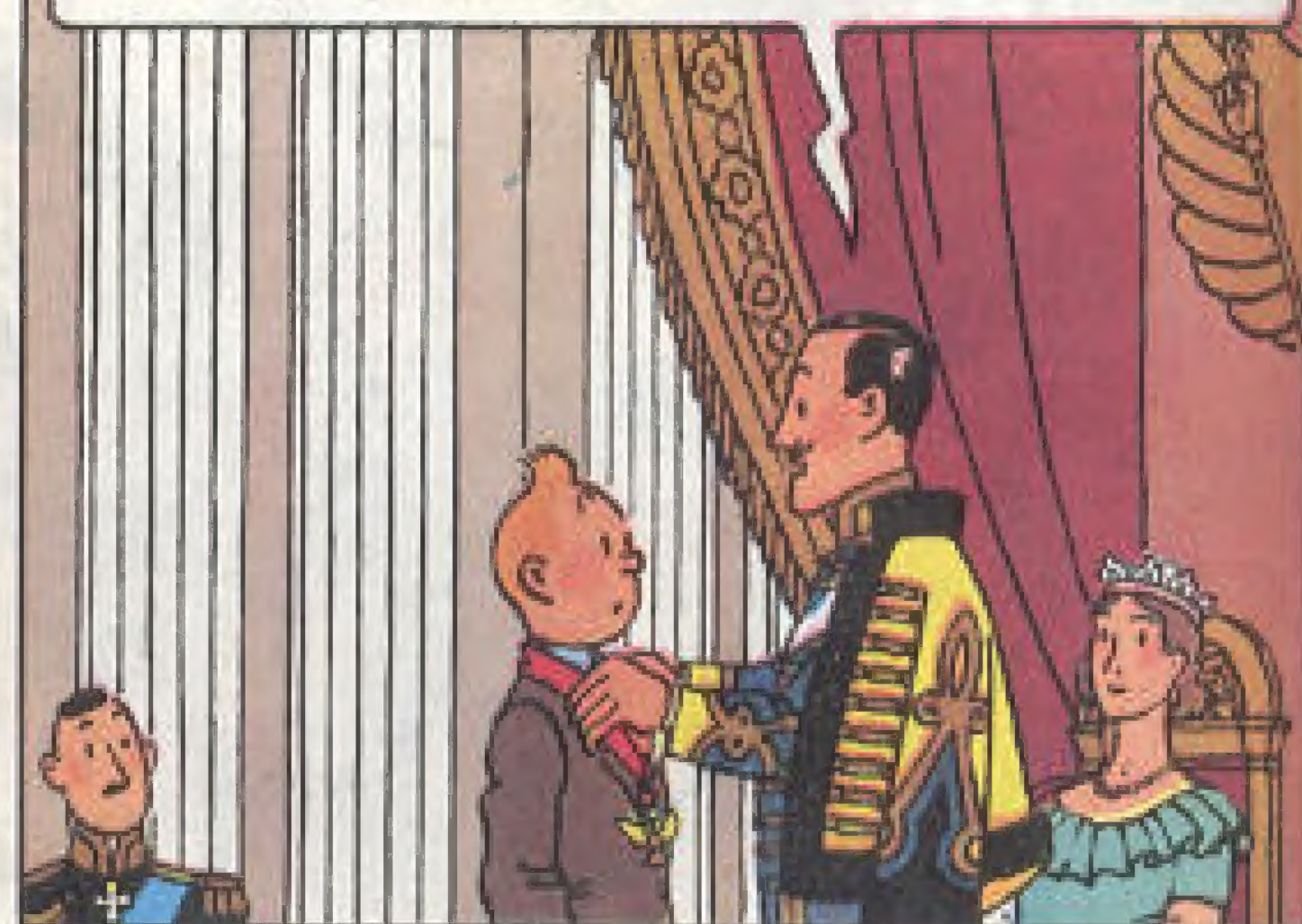




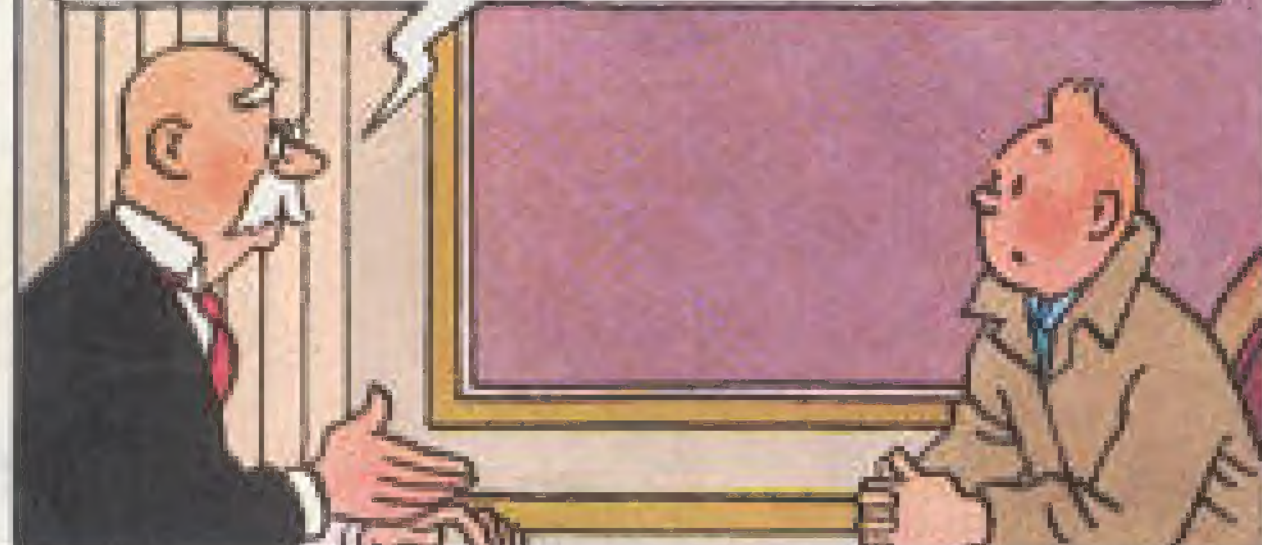
My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen. Never in our long history has the Order of the Golden Pelican been conferred upon a foreigner. But today with the full agreement of Our ministers, We bestow this high distinction upon Mr. Tintin, to express Our gratitude for the great services he has rendered to Our country..



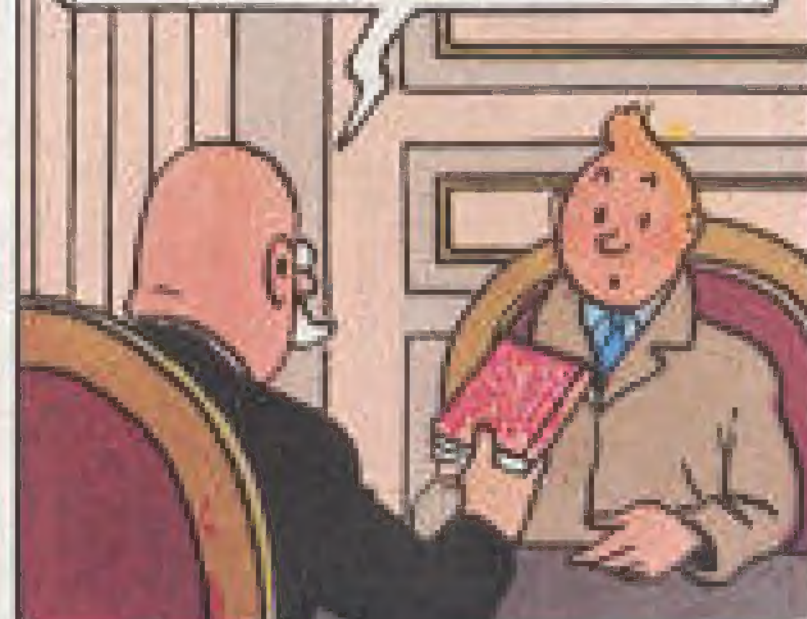
Tintin, Knight of the Order of the Golden Pelican...



I expect you will like to hear the result of our enquiries. You already know that Müssler, leader of the Iron Guard, has been arrested with most of his followers. Calling themselves the Iron Guard they were in fact the Z.Z.R.K., the Zyldev Zentral Revolutzionär Komitzät, whose aims were the deposition of our King, and the annexation of our country by Borduria...



Professor Alembick was also arrested at Müssler's home where he hid after the theft of the sceptre. This little book was found on him...



Stassanov, Igor.  
Ambassador  
A very close friend.  
Met him in Belgrade in 1913 at a sigillographical congress.  
Gave me a letter of introduction to study national archives in Klow. He



I know him. He's the man who collapsed in my room! But look!... That's me!...



It's incredible!... But what was this note book for?...

So that they would know everyone who went to see the real Professor Alembick... Here is another photograph found at Müssler's house which is the key to the puzzle...





